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Willie A. Selses.
From his
Aunt Sallie,

Dec. 1872



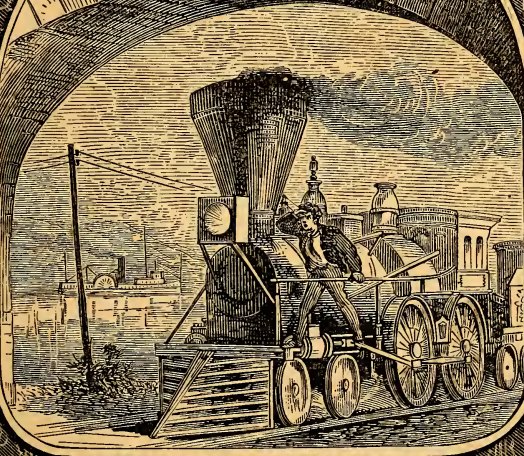
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LAKE SHORE SERIES

BY

OLIVER OPTIC.



BEAR AND FORBEAR.

LEE & SHEPARD.
BOSTON.

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THE LAKE SHORE SERIES.

BEAR AND FORBEAR;

OR, THE

YOUNG SKIPPER OF LAKE UCAYGA.

BY

OLIVER OPTIC, *pseud.*

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG AMERICA ABROAD," "THE ARMY AND NAVY STORIES,"
"THE WOODVILLE STORIES," "THE BOAT-CLUB STORIES,"
"THE STARRY FLAG STORIES," ETC.

(William Taylor Adams)

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TO

*HELEN HAMLIN, FRANK HAMLIN, JARVIS L. CARTER,
EDWARD STETSON, CHARLIE HAMLIN, ISALAH STETSON,
ADDIE HAMLIN, MARY STETSON,*

AND "A THOUSAND AND ONE OTHER BOYS AND GIRLS" OF THE
CITY OF BANGOR, WHO SENT ME A BLACK BEAR, IN TOKEN
OF THEIR LOVE AND ESTEEM, ADMONISHING ME
NOT TO EAT HIM, BUT TO INSTRUCT AND
TO PRESERVE HIM FROM THE EVILS
OF THIS WICKED WORLD,

This Book

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

Though I did not eat him, nor any part thereof, and his life was too short to permit him to profit by any instruction I might have been able to give him, yet he is preserved from "the evils of this wicked world" at the rooms of the Society of Natural History, and I hope my readers will profit by the story he suggested.

O. O.

253170

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5. *BRAKE UP*; or, The Young Peacemakers.
6. *BEAR AND FORBEAR*; or, The Young Skipper of Lake Ucayga.

P R E F A C E .

“BEAR AND FORBEAR” is the sixth and last of the Lake Shore Series, and was one of the serials which appeared in Oliver Optic’s Magazine. The story itself is complete, and independent of its predecessors, though the characters that have been prominent in the other volumes of the series are again presented, to be finally dealt with according to their several deserts. The writer has endeavored to show that fidelity to duty prospers even in this world, and that evil doing brings pain and misery; and if he has awarded “poetical justice” to each, it will only make the contrast the more evident.

The author has endeavored to make a proper use of the Christian precept which forms the principal title; and he trusts that his readers, both young and old, will be able to deduce the moral from the story, and, profiting by it, be enabled to avoid such disagreeable ruptures as that which threatened the peace of the two communities in the story, but which the “two bears” happily prevented.

In closing this series, the author desires once more to thank his juvenile and his adult friends for the kind consideration they have always extended to him, and for the increasing favor bestowed upon his efforts to please and to instruct.

HARRISON SQUARE, BOSTON,

June 1, 1870.

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BEAR AND FORBEAR;

OR,

THE YOUNG SKIPPER OF LAKE UCAYGA.

CHAPTER I.

ON BOARD THE BELLE.

“**W**OLF, I am about ready to buy this boat, if you are about ready to sell it,” said Tom Walton, as we were sailing up the lake in the Belle.

“I’m quite ready to sell it to you, Tom,” I replied.

“You ought to own her by this time, Tom,” added Waddie Wimbleton, who was one of the party.

We were going up the lake to have a good time; in other words, it was vacation with me. When Tom Walton spoke, I was thinking of the events

of the past, as the sail-boat glided swiftly over the clear waters of Lake Ucayga. I was the general agent of the Union Line, which now included the Lake Shore Railroad and the Ucayga Steamboat. The two *millionnaires*, who had fixed their residences on opposite sides of the lake, at the Narrows, where it is only one mile wide, had been the most bitter enemies for years, taking up the hatchet after a long period of the most intimate and friendly relations. Major Toppleton had built the Lake Shore Railroad as a plaything for the students of the Institute established on his side of the lake, in order to give them a thorough and practical knowledge of railway business. The idea had grown on his hands till the road had become a very important channel of travel. Buying up the stock of the old steamers on the lake, he had obtained the control of them, and ran them in connection with the railroad. This movement gave Middleport, on the major's side of the lake, a very great advantage over Centreport, where Colonel Wimpleton resided.

Then the two great men became rivals for the business of the lake; and the colonel built a large

and splendid steamer, to run in opposition to the railroad, which, by its great speed and elegant accommodations, had carried the day against the railroad. The students of the Wimpleton Institute were formed into a company, and nominally managed the affairs of the steamer, thus obtaining an insight into the method of conducting business in stock companies. I had been a kind of shuttlecock between the rival magnates, and had been successively employed and discharged by each. The war between the two sides of the lake had extended to the families of the principal parties, and the inhabitants of the large towns in which they lived. The two sons of the great men had been particularly hostile; but, having mended their ways, and, from vicious, overbearing, tyrannical young men, becoming kind, gentle, and noble, they buried the hatchet, and their relations were pleasant and friendly. By their indirect efforts, with some help from me, the feud between the fathers had been healed, and they were now warm personal friends. The railroad and steamboat lines had been united, and were now running in connection with each other.

I am not disposed to say much about my own agency in bringing about this happy state of things, though I had labored patiently and persistently for years to accomplish the result. I was happy in the achievement, and not inclined to apportion the credit of it among those who had brought it about, except to award a very large share of it to the sons of the two magnates. The two lines had been running in connection about two months. As the general superintendent of the united line, I had gone over the entire route daily until everything worked to my own satisfaction, as well as to that of the travelling public. As captain of the steamer, I had been constantly employed all winter, and I felt disposed to play a few days. It was vacation at both the Institutes, and Tommy Toppleton had gone to one of the great watering-places with his father and mother, though the time fixed for their return had arrived. Waddie Wimbleton had accepted an invitation to spend a few days on a cruise with me up the lake. We intended to live on board of the Belle, and spend the time in fishing, sailing, and rambling through the wild region.

I had bought the Belle at auction, at a time when I was out of employment, having been discharged by Major Toppleton from my situation as engineer on the Lake Shore Railroad. She had cost me a very small sum, compared with her value, and I intended to make my living by taking out parties in her. But, as I was very soon appointed to the command of the steamer, I employed Tom Walton to run her for me; and he paid me a portion of the receipts. He had done well for himself, and well for me, in her. Tom was a very honest, industrious, and capable fellow, and supported his mother and the rest of the family by his labor. I had told him I would sell the Belle to him at a fair price, any time when he wished to buy her. I had been rather surprised that he did not avail himself of this offer, for my share of the earnings of the boat had already paid me double the amount she had cost me.

"I think of going into the general navigation business," said Tom, with one of his good-natured laughs; and if I can buy her, I will do so."

"You can, Tom," I replied.

"My mother has been sick a good deal for the

last two years, and it took about all I could make to take care of the family, or I should have bought her before."

"I'll trust you, Tom," I added.

"I don't want anybody to trust me, except to keep the folks from starving. I didn't mean to buy that boat till I had money enough to pay for her. I've got a little ahead now."

"How much have you, Tom?" I asked.

"I haven't enough to bust the Middleport Bank yet. You've used me first rate, Wolf, and I don't mean to cheat you on this boat. After all, whether I buy her or not rather depends on what you ask for her."

"You shall have her for what she will bring at auction."

"What will she bring at auction?"

"I don't know."

"I don't think I can buy her, then, for I know a man in town who will start the bidding at one hundred and fifty."

"Do you? Well, I had no idea any one would give that for her," I replied.

I saw that Tom was troubled, though he still kept his face alive with his usual smile. I would have given him the boat at once, only the offer to do so would wound his pride and hurt his feelings, for, poor as he was, he had the instincts of a gentleman.

"I shall make money by buying the boat, Wolf, and I want her badly, but not enough to run in debt for her," added he.

"Suppose we do as Major Toppleton and Colonel Wimpleton did on the steamers."

"What's that?"

"Mark."

"I'm willing to mark; but I'm afraid I can't hit your figures, Wolf, for the Belle is a valuable piece of property. I ought to know that, if no one else does."

"You write what you are willing to give, and I will write what I am willing to take. If my figures are lower than yours, they shall be the price of the boat, and the trade is completed."

"Your figures?"

"Yes."

“Why not my figures, if they are higher than yours?”

“If you give all I ask, that’s enough. If my figures are higher than yours, we will split the difference,” I continued, handing him a pencil and paper.

“That’s fair, so far as I am concerned; but don’t you cheat yourself, Wolf,” replied Tom, taking the paper and making his figures upon it, after considerable hesitation.

“You needn’t worry about me, my dear fellow. Give your figures to Waddie. He shall stand between us,” I added, as I wrote my own valuation, and handed it to him.

“There is considerable difference in your estimates,” laughed Waddie. “What am I to do?—split the difference?”

“Not unless my figures are higher than Tom’s.”

“They are not, Wolf. Tom’s are a mile and a half higher than yours.”

“Then the boat is sold at my price,” I added.

“Cheap enough!” exclaimed Waddie.

“What are the figures?” asked Tom.

“You marked one hundred and fifty dollars, Tom, and Wolf marked fifty dollars. So the Belle is sold.”

"So am I," said the skipper.

"Are you not satisfied?"

"No; I feel just as though I had been overreached. See here, Wolf Penniman; I didn't mean to have you give me this boat."

"I haven't given her to you."

"I supposed you would ask three or four hundred dollars for her."

"I am satisfied, Tom. I have made money out of her, and now I get back all she cost me."

"But don't you think it's an insult to the Belle to sell her for fifty dollars?" laughed Tom.

"If she does not complain, you need not."

"Wolf, I don't feel exactly right about it. I have a kind of an idea that you have taken pity on me, for a poor, miserable fellow as I am, and given me the boat."

"No such thing, Tom!" I protested.

"Didn't I say there was a man in town that would bid a hundred and fifty dollars on her if she was put up at auction?"

"I don't know him, Tom; and I'm afraid he would not use her kindly. The Belle is yours."

"I can afford to give you a hundred for her without busting the Middleport Bank. Don't you think I'd better do it?"

"Certainly not, Tom. A trade is a trade."

"But I feel just as though I had stolen her."

"Don't feel so, my dear fellow. I will give you a bill of sale when I can get something to write it with. It's all right now, Tom. 'Be virtuous and you will be happy,' and your boat will sail all the faster for it."

"I am happy, Wolf. I have saved up about one hundred and fifty dollars. I thought that would almost buy the Belle. Now I'm just a hundred in. I'm going into the general navigation business, and I want some more boats, to let, and I'm lucky enough to have the capital to invest in them. I shall buy some row-boats, for there are lots of people that want to hire them."

"I have no doubt you will do a good business letting boats, Tom. Rowing is a great art, and a healthy one. But have good boats. Don't buy poor ones because they are cheap."

"Not I, Wolf; my boats shall be first chop, 'A,

No. 1, prime.' But I suppose you gentlemen want some dinner — don't you?"

"We do want some dinner, Tom," I replied. "I make a business of attending to that matter every day."

"Exactly so, Wolf. That's just what you thought the last time you thought so."

"Eating dinner I have always found to be a healthy amusement, and I intend to follow it up as long as I live, and can get any dinner to eat," I replied.

"You will always get it, Wolf, for you are a rich man now; and you will die worth a million, if you don't die before you have a million. Now, if you will take the helm, you shall have a beefsteak and some baked potatoes, first chop, A, No. 1, prime, in about half an hour, more or less, but rather more than less."

I took the tiller, and Tom went into the cuddy to prepare the meal. In half an hour, more or less, we had the beefsteak and baked potatoes, smoking hot, done to a turn, and just as nice as the best hotel in the country could furnish.

CHAPTER II.

A NEW ACQUAINTANCE.

WE left Middleport early in the morning, and when we dined, we were above Priam. We intended to land at a point near the residence of my old friend Captain Portman, to enable me to call upon him. We arrived at this point early in the afternoon. Waddie was not acquainted with my friend, and did not care to call upon him; but he decided to take a walk on shore, and we proceeded together till we came to the entrance to Captain Portman's grounds. He was a wealthy gentleman, who had chosen this wild region for his residence, for he was a genuine lover of the beauties of nature, and enjoyed them as much in the winter as the summer.

The country was exceedingly wild and rugged. The rocks rose in precipitous steeps at times, and

there was a profusion of cascades and cataracts. One might follow a stream through the depths of the primeval forests, and find it leaping from the precipices a dozen times in a single mile. In the midst of this magnificent scenery Captain Portman had built his mansion, selecting a rugged steep for its site; and here Nature and Art had joined hands to increase the loveliness of the place. Half a mile from his house, on the road to Priam, was the Cataract House—a hotel which had received its name from a grand and beautiful waterfall in the vicinity. At this house, during the summer, many wealthy people boarded.

When we reached the road which leads from Hitaca to Priam, Waddie turned to the right and I turned to the left. I was about to enter the rustic gateway which opened into the estate of Captain Portman, when I was startled by a succession of shrill screams. I saw Waddie spring into the woods which bounded the road on the left. The voice of the person in distress—for I supposed no one would scream unless in distress—was that of a female. Of course I was interested; and, turning

from the gateway, I rushed down the road, and followed Waddie into the woods.

I had made such good time that I overtook my fellow-voyager before he reached the scene of the adventure. The trees were very large, and the grove had been cleared up on the ground for the convenience of the visitors at the Cataract House, so that we could see some distance; and we soon discovered the person who had uttered the terrific screams. She was a young lady, elegantly dressed, and apparently not more than seventeen years old.

“Help! Help!” she cried, as she stood apparently paralyzed.

But we could see nothing to alarm her, though we discovered a young gentleman in the distance “making tracks” in the direction of the hotel.

“What is the matter with her?” asked Waddie.

“I don’t see anything to frighten her.”

“I do,” added Waddie, as we stepped forward, and discovered a small black bear, which a huge tree had before hidden from our view.

“A bear!” I exclaimed.

The creature stood up on his hind legs, and was

reaching forward with his right fore paw towards the young lady, while the left was dropped at his side. For my own part, I do not remember that I had ever even seen a bear before, and I confess that I did not like the looks of him. Whether Waddie shared my feeling or not I do not know; but he quickened his pace, and soon placed himself by the side of the interesting sufferer. Neither of us had a club, knife, or other weapon, and we were not in condition to face a wild beast.

“Save me!” gasped the young lady.

“I will conduct you to the hotel, if you please,” said Waddie, hardly noticing the bear, which still sat upon his haunches, with his right paw extended towards the terrified maiden.

“O, dear me! I cannot move,” sighed she.

Waddie took her by the arm, and supported her. As they moved off, the bear followed.

“He’s coming!” cried the lady; and, afraid that the awful monster would pounce upon her behind, she halted and faced him again.

The moment they stopped, Bruin stood up on his haunches again, and held out his paw as before. I

came to the conclusion that if he intended to eat any one up, he would have begun before this time, and I ventured to place myself between him and the lady. This brave movement on my part seemed to afford the lady some relief; but she clung to Waddie as though she expected to be devoured, brown silk dress, laces, ruffles, and all. The bear looked at me a moment, as I stood about a rod distant from him. Dropping upon all fours again, he cantered towards me. I was inclined to beat a retreat, but somehow the animal did not seem to be as ferocious as wild beasts have the credit of being, and, though it required no little resolution on my part, I decided to stand my ground.

The bear was about the size of a full-grown Newfoundland dog, but broader across the back, and much heavier, weighing, I judged, over a hundred pounds. He opened his mouth as though in the act of laughing. I had had no experience with wild animals, but I had an idea that they howled and made a "general row" when they were savage, and intended to do mischief. After the first sight of the bear, my courage gradually increased, and I

am happy to say that I did full justice to my valor on this occasion. I did not run away. The bear came close to me, and then erecting himself again, he extended his right paw as before, looking up into my face as pleasantly and cunningly as though he had been a playful child.

The fellow evidently means something by his action; but I was not sufficiently skilled in bear nature to comprehend him. He was not savage, and did not exhibit the slightest intention to use the fine rows of elegant teeth which he displayed. This assurance was very comforting to me. I retreated two or three paces as a strategic movement, in order to develop the further intentions of the enemy, if he was an enemy. The rascal followed me, again stood up, and presented his paw.

“Don’t be afraid, miss. He will not hurt anything,” said I, as the young lady was again alarmed by the last move of the bear. “He is quite harmless.”

“I am afraid he will bite me!” gasped she; and she would not have suffered any more if she had already been bitten.

"Shall I leave you, Wolf?" asked Waddie.

"Yes, certainly; the bear is as harmless as a kitten," I replied.

"Allow me to conduct you to the hotel," added Waddie, gallantly. "I suppose you are staying at the hotel."

"Yes; I had been walking with Lord Palsgrave, when that awful creature came upon me," she replied.

"Whom did I understand you to say you were walking with?"

"With Lord Palsgrave."

"Ah, then you are English people?" added Waddie, who was doubtless duly impressed with the quality of his new acquaintance.

"Lord Palsgrave is English, but I am not."

"If you will allow me, I will conduct you to the hotel."

"I am so frightened, I fear I cannot walk so far."

"You need not leave on account of the bear," I interposed. "He is as gentle and tame as a baby kitten."

By this time I had discovered what Bruin meant by his mysterious movement with the right fore paw.

When I had worked my courage up to the sticking point, I extended my hand towards him, to see if he would snap at it. If he did, I concluded that I should use a big stone which lay on the ground at my feet. If he wanted to fight, I felt that, in the cause of a terrified maiden, — very pretty, too, at that, — I could afford to test the relative hardness of the bear's head and the rock.

But I wronged him. The bear had no belligerent intentions. He was evidently a good fellow in his way; and, if bearish in his manners, he was friendly in his disposition. Instead of snapping at my hand, he reached forward his paw, and I realized then that he only desired to shake hands with me. I had learned a sufficient amount of politeness to accommodate him in this respect, and when I took his paw he bowed his head several times, to indicate his pleasure at making my acquaintance. I could not suffer myself to be behind him in courtesy, and I bowed as often as he did.

I heard Waddie laughing heartily, and turning round, I saw that the young lady was beginning to smile at the passage of compliments between me and

the bear. I must say that I was delighted with my new acquaintance, he was so very polite and well mannered. But I had not yet measured the depth of his affection for me. He was not satisfied with merely bowing and shaking hands with me, but insisted upon hugging me. First he embraced my arm, and then my body, though I did not yet feel quite well enough acquainted with him to endure the final transport of his devotion. I shook him off, and he tumbled upon the ground. Then he began to roll over, as a dog is taught to do, making the most extravagant demonstrations of affectionate regard towards me. In a few moments I was rolling on the grass with him, and I felt confidence enough in his good intentions to return his embraces. I put my hand in his mouth, but he did not bite; and though his sharp claws were rather trying to the nap of my coat, he used them only in sport.

“Won’t you come up and shake hands with him, Miss —”

“Miss Dornwood,” she added, supplementing my question. “No, I thank you. I thought he was a wild bear.”

"No, he is as tame as a kitten. He only wanted to shake hands with you. I am sure he would not hurt any one."

"He is real funny; and I wish I dared to play with him," added she, shrinking back, as Bruin followed me a little nearer to the place where she stood.

"Don't bring him any nearer, Wolf," laughed Waddie. "'Distance lends enchantment to the view.'"

I sat down upon a rock, and continued to play with the bear, while Waddie and Miss Dornwood watched the sport at a respectful distance.

"I don't know what I am to do with this fellow, now I have made his acquaintance," I continued, as I tumbled him over upon the ground when his embraces became a little too ardent. "I see by the looks of his neck that he has been in the habit of wearing a collar."

"If you will only keep him away from me, I don't care what you do with him," said Miss Dornwood. "I don't think they ought to let such creatures wander about these grounds, for it is almost as bad to be frightened to death as to be eaten up."

“Where is the gentleman who was with you?” asked Waddie.

“He went to the hotel after a vehicle, for we intended to take a ride along the lake when we saw this road. We only arrived this morning, and we find it a very beautiful region.”

“There come three men,” added Waddie, pointing into the woods.

I recognized Captain Portman as one of them.

CHAPTER III.

AN ANGRY GUARDIAN.

“**H**OW do you do, Captain Penniman? I am delighted to see you,” said Captain Portman, coming up to me, and extending his hand.

As I took his hand, a burst of laughter from Waddie and Miss Dornwood attracted my attention. Turning my head to ascertain what amused them, I saw the bear standing on his hind legs, and extending his paw, as he had done to me, evidently wishing to shake hands with the new comer. Captain Portman took his offered paw, and gave Bruin a warm greeting.

“So, my old rogue, you have got away again,” said he, as he patted the bear on the head.

“You seem to be acquainted with my old friend here,” said I.

“Yes, he belongs to me; but he bothers me sadly,” replied Captain Portman. “Unless we buckle his

collar very tight, he slips it over his head; and if it is tight, it worries him and makes him cross. He has got out of my grounds several times, and frightened strangers staying at the hotel. The landlord says he will shoot him, if he finds him loose again."

"He frightened this young lady," I added.

"I am very sorry," said Captain Portman, turning to the lady. "He is entirely harmless."

"I see he is now, sir; but I supposed he was a wild bear," replied Miss Dornwood.

"When I knew he was loose, I hastened to find him, lest the landlord should put his threat into execution," continued Captain Portman, caressing the bear. "He makes so much trouble that I am afraid I shall have to get rid of him; but I do not like the idea of killing him while he makes himself so agreeable. If you will take him, Wolf, I will give him to you, for I know you will treat him kindly."

"Thank you, sir. I should be delighted to own him," I answered. "I have a nice place for him at home."

"You shall have him."

"He and I will be warm friends."

And Bruin, as if he comprehended the new relation between us, gave me one of his warmest hugs.

“How do you happen to be here, Wolf, without calling upon me?” asked Captain Portman.

“I was just going up to your house when I heard this lady scream, and I hastened back to her assistance.”

“Gallant as ever,” said he, laughing. “Then I shall see you again to-day.”

“Yes, sir. I will call at your house in the course of the afternoon.”

“My men will take care of the bear for you till you are ready to return to Middleport, if you desire.”

I assented to this arrangement, and the two men who came with Captain Portman took charge of the bear, though he was very unwilling to be separated from me. I should have gone with the captain, but I desired to see Lord Palsgrave, for whom Miss Dornwood was waiting. I had never seen a live lord, and I was anxious to behold the phenomenon. I supposed he would soon appear with the vehicle for which he had gone.

“I am very much obliged to you for the service

you have rendered me, gentlemen," said she, as the party moved off with the bear.

"Not at all," replied Waddie. "I am very glad, for one, to have served you."

"And I have made an excellent friend by the adventure," I added.

"Do you refer to the bear, or to me?" said Miss Dornwood, archly.

"I confess that I referred to the bear."

"I hope you will include me."

"Then I have made two excellent friends."

"Lord Palsgrave seems to be a long time obtaining the vehicle," she added, glancing towards the road.

"Is Lord Palsgrave an old gentleman?" I asked.

"Dear me! No," replied Miss Dornwood, with a blush. "He is only nineteen."

"Nineteen! Well, I had an idea that lords were always old men."

"Not at all. Lord Palsgrave is quite a young man."

"Was it he we saw going towards the hotel when you screamed?"

"Yes; he left me only a few moments before I saw the bear."

I came to the conclusion, guided partly by the blush which mantled her cheek when she spoke of him, and partly by the fact that his lordship was only nineteen, that he was a lover; and I was rather sorry that she was already entangled, for I thought Waddie regarded Miss Dornwood with more interest than I had ever before seen him look upon a young lady. She was certainly a very pretty girl, and I did not blame Lord Palsgrave for taking a fancy to her.

His lordship did not come with the vehicle, though an hour had elapsed since his departure, and Miss Dornwood was beginning to be impatient. We did not think it was polite to leave her, and we continued to talk about the bear, Lord Palsgrave, and such other topics as we could find available. While we were thus engaged, I saw a lady and gentleman approaching us. As they came nearer, the latter disengaged himself from his companion, and hastened to the spot where we stood. He was a young man of twenty-five, and looked very cross. I did not like the looks of him, and I saw that Miss Dornwood was very much disturbed by his coming.

“What are you doing here, Edith?” demanded he,

bestowing a contemptuous glance upon Waddie and myself.

“I am waiting for Lord Palsgrave,” she replied, her cheek flushed, and her lips trembling.

“Who are these persons?” continued he.

“I do not know who they are, but they have been very kind to me, and I am very grateful to them.”

“No doubt you are!” sneered the gentleman; and I realized that we had encountered another bear, though not so well behaved as the first had been. “Do you pick up acquaintances in this manner without my knowledge?”

“Why, Charles!”

I saw that Miss Dornwood was greatly agitated and deeply grieved at this ungentle treatment, and I did not wonder at it.

“What are you doing here?” he continued, rudely.

“I am waiting for Lord Palsgrave.”

“I don’t wonder that Lord Palsgrave does not come, if he sees you engaged in this manner. Do you put yourself on familiar terms with entire strangers?”

“How rude you are, Charles!” exclaimed Miss

Dornwood, struggling to repress her tears at his unkind treatment.

"I beg your pardon, sir," interposed Waddie; "but there was another bear—there was a bear in the woods here. The lady encountered him, and we came to her assistance."

"A bear!" sneered the gentleman.

"A bear, sir!" repeated Waddie, with emphasis. "It is true, he was a tame bear, but he frightened the lady, and her screams attracted our attention."

"If you have rendered her any assistance, I am obliged to you for it," said the gentleman, coldly. "Edith, go back to the hotel."

"Lord Palsgrave told me to meet him at the road when he came with the carriage," pleaded the young lady.

"I insist that you return to the hotel," added the gentleman, almost fiercely. "I have forbidden your making acquaintances without my knowledge."

"I couldn't help it, Charles."

"Will you return to the hotel?"

"No; I will not, Charles! I will not be treated in this rude manner before strangers," she replied,

bursting into tears, and retreating a few paces from her tormentor.

“So, miss! Do you dare to disobey me?” demanded he, his cheeks red with anger.

“I will not be treated in this manner before strangers,” she replied, with spirit, as she wiped away her tears.

“What will Lord Palsgrave say when he finds you making friends so easily?”

“I don’t care what he says; but I will not be treated like a little child, Charles Overton.”

“We will see! Will you return to the hotel, or shall I carry you there?” said the brute, stepping towards her.

“Neither, Charles,” she answered, retreating a step or two before him. “These young gentlemen came to my assistance when I needed their help, and I am very grateful to them.”

“I trust you have thanked the young gentlemen for their service.”

“I have.”

“That’s enough, then. Now you will return to the hotel.”

“I will not, Charles Overton. I have obeyed you in all things; but when you insult me before strangers, and insult them too, I will not endure it.”

“Very fine, Edith! But you will return to the hotel, and obey me now, as you always have done.”

“I shall return to the hotel when I am ready to do so, but not before;” and Edith looked as though she meant all she said.

Behind all this there was evidently a history of which Waddie and I were entirely ignorant. I concluded that the irritable gentleman was the young lady’s guardian, and was doubtless armed with proper authority to command and control her. But she was not less than seventeen, and certainly she was entitled to some consideration from him. As she had suggested, he treated her like a little child, and his conduct was rude and ungentlemanly in the extreme. I sympathized with Edith; but I did not deem it proper or prudent to interfere. I saw that Waddie, who was naturally rash and impetuous, found it exceedingly difficult to restrain himself under the provocation.

“Edith, you shall obey me!” exclaimed Mr. Overton, springing towards her, with the intention of dragging her back to the hotel.

"I beg your pardon, sir," interposed Waddie, stepping between the angry guardian and his ward. "I hope you will not use any violence."

At that moment I heard a kind of clattering noise, and turning, I saw the bear rushing at railroad speed towards us. He had doubtless escaped from Captain Portman's men, and had come back to renew the agreeable acquaintance he had made. Now, Mr. Overton happened to be the nearest person to him as he approached the group, and Bruin leaped up to him, and placed his paws upon the arm extended to grasp Edith. Perhaps he thought the parties were playing, and he wished to have a hand in the game.

Mr. Overton evidently had not seen the bear till he felt his paws upon his arm. A man who is a tyrant is necessarily a coward; and turning his head, the savage guardian saw the bear, with his mouth open. His expression was one of abject terror, and, starting back, he shook the playful animal from him. Bruin immediately stood up, and extended his paw, as though he were ready to make friends with all mankind. To my surprise, Miss Dornwood grasped the paw with her gloved hand, and shook it warmly. Probably

she thought that, between the two bears, he was the less savage and bearish.

“You do not seem to like him any better than I did at first,” said Edith, glancing at Mr. Overton, who had retreated to a safe distance. “I suppose I am forbidden to make his acquaintance, but I shall do so.”

Bruin had doubtless been trained to respect ladies, and did not offer any rough familiarities to her, as he had to me. He stood up before her, and received her caresses with a good-natured grin. Mr. Overton, seeing that the bear did not proceed to eat any of us up, regained his self-possession.

“If you wish to avoid trouble, Edith, you will go to the hotel at once,” said he, renewing the attack.

“I shall not go,” she replied, earnestly.

“Then I shall lead you there.”

And stepping forward to enforce his threat, the bear, perhaps thinking he meant to have a frolic, sprang upon him with extended paws.

“Take him away! Take him away!” cried Mr. Overton, utterly unable to appreciate the familiar overtures of the bear.

“He will not hurt you, sir.”

“Take him off—will you?” gasped he, in terror.

“Here, Bruin, come here,” interposed Edith, pulling him by the neck.

The bear turned to her, stood up, and extended his paw to her.

CHAPTER IV.

FIRE ON THE LAKE.

I BEGAN to think my bear was as fickle as human beings, for he seemed to have taken quite a fancy to Edith. Certainly, in this respect, I was willing to believe he was a bear of excellent taste.

He did not offer to hug her arm, or to take other liberties with her, but was very affectionate, while he was very circumspect. Mr. Overton did not again attempt to use force with the young lady while she was thus guarded.

“Let the ugly beast alone, Edith!” growled her disconcerted guardian.

“He behaves very well now, Charles, and I am not afraid of him.”

“Once more, are you going to the hotel, or not?”

“Very soon I am, if Lord Palsgrave does not appear,” she replied, still caressing Bruin.

“I think, Waddie, I will go up to Captain Portman’s. His men are coming again after the bear, and I will take him along with me,” I interposed. “Come, Bruin, old fellow, don’t you know me?”

I put my hand upon his head, and he leaped upon me, as though he was heartily glad to renew the acquaintance.

“I am going to the hotel, Miss Dornwood,” said Waddie, touching his cap to the young lady, and moving in the direction indicated.

She placed herself at his side, and they started together.

“You are not going with her, sir,” said Mr. Overton, angrily.

“Then she will go with me.”

“You young puppy!”

“Gently, if you please, sir,” added Waddie, quietly.

“Stop, Edith!” commanded the guardian.

“You told me to go to the hotel, Charles, and I am going,” she replied.

“Not with that young man.”

“That shall be as he pleases.”

“No; it shall be as I please. Stop, sir! Do you hear me?” cried Mr. Overton.

"If I understand the matter, sir, you have no control over me, if you have over this lady," replied Waddie, turning around to address the guardian.

They continued on their walk, followed by Mr. Overton, who was presently joined by the lady he had left when he came forward to discipline his ward. They soon disappeared among the trees, and I made my way to the mansion of Captain Portman, where I spent a couple of hours very pleasantly. I told him about the adventure we had had with Edith and her guardian.

"I pity the poor girl," I added; "for this Mr. Overton is a petty tyrant, who must make her very uncomfortable."

"Doubtless it is very unfortunate for her; but it is one of those cases with which outsiders cannot meddle," replied my friend.

"I think he would have dragged her up to the hotel by force, if the bear had not interfered."

"Well, the interference came better from the bear than from you."

"Do you think one ought to stand by, and see a man abuse a young lady without taking her part?" I inquired, with considerable interest.

“That’s a hard question to answer, Wolf. The gentleman is her guardian, and has authority over her; but if he were actually abusing her, I am inclined to think I should interfere on my own responsibility. Yet it is not prudent to meddle with things of this kind.”

“I am afraid Waddie will meddle,” I added.

“He seemed to be rather interested in the young lady.”

“He should be very careful what he does.”

“I must go over to the hotel, and see that he does not get into trouble.”

“But you will come and spend the night with me, Wolf.”

“We intended to sleep on board of the Belle.”

“I shall be very glad to see you and Waddie tonight, and I hope you will spend a day with me before your return home.”

“Thank you, sir. I will do so, if possible,” I replied.

I walked to the hotel, and found Waddie on the piazza. He looked very nervous and uneasy, and I was afraid something had happened.

“Where is the young lady?” I asked.

"She is in the house," he replied. "I was hoping I should see her again. There is something wrong somewhere, Wolf. A man don't treat a young lady like that unless there is something wrong."

"It is hardly proper for us to meddle with the matter," I suggested.

"I don't purpose to meddle with it, unless he abuses her before my face. If he does that, I shall feel justified in protecting her; for a man has no right to abuse even his own child. But I should like to know something more about the matter," continued Waddie, warmly.

"Did she say anything to you on your way up to the hotel?" I asked.

"Not a word. We were talking about the bear all the way. Her guardian followed close to us. I know by her sad manner that she is in trouble all the time. After the brute spoke to her as he did, my sympathies were all with her."

"I don't think we shall be likely to see her again. This man is evidently her guardian, and he will take care that she does not come out of her room again to-day."

“I would give a good deal to know what the trouble is between them. He must be some relation to her, or she would not call him Charles.”

“Very likely. Did you see Lord Palsgrave?” I inquired.

“Not a lord,” laughed Waddie. “I asked the landlord about him, and was told his lordship had taken a horse and buggy, but had not been seen since. Mr. Overton appears to be a little worried about him; but I don’t believe he has run away.”

“I think we shall have to give up the idea of seeing the show to-night,” I suggested.

“We shall be about here a few days, and we will come up to the hotel again,” replied Waddie. “I am ready to go down to the boat when you are.”

“I don’t think there is anything more for us to say or do here;” and we started for the lake.

Tom had put the Belle in good order during our absence, and caught some fish for supper. While he was cooking them, we sat in the cabin, and told him our adventure in the woods, informing him that he would have a black bear for a passenger on the return voyage.

"If he only behaves himself, I don't care what he is," laughed the young skipper.

"If he don't behave well, you must bear with him," said Waddie.

"I'll do that, for I can't bear to quarrel with anybody, even if he is a bear," added Tom.

"It is barely possible that he may help you, for he can bear a hand in an emergency," I continued.

"Does he wear gloves?" asked the skipper.

"No."

"How can he bare a hand, then?" grinned Tom.

"However he will make a good barometer."

"He knows *weather*—it rains or not."

"By the way, Wolf, is he barefooted?" inquired Tom.

"Yes, and barefaced."

"Can he sing?"

"Certainly; he is a barytone. But, punning aside, I must go home a day sooner, and build a house for him."

"Baronial halls!" exclaimed Waddie.

"Forbear!" I added.

"What's for bear?" asked Tom. "Beefsteak?"

“Not an ounce; he must have no meat. It would make him savage, and then he would eat up all the cats and kittens in the neighborhood, if not the children,” I replied.

“Don’t make a bugbear of him, Wolf,” added Waddie.

“Fish ready!” shouted Tom. “Bear this dish to the table, if you please.”

“Let the table bear it,” said Waddie.

“The fish smells good, and I think my stomach will bear some of it,” I added, as we seated ourselves at the table.

The odor of the dish before us did not belie its quality, and we ate a very hearty supper. For a vacation, this kind of life exactly suited me. I enjoyed the sailing and the fishing very much, and it was delightful to put in at the various points and ramble on shore, while sleeping in the little cabin of the Belle added a new excitement to the cruise. I had begun to think Ucayga Lake was rather too small to afford full scope for the pleasures of such an occasion; and I thought, when I was able, and had the time, a yacht cruise on the ocean would suit me ex-

actly. But the lake was certainly very pleasant, and I was not disposed to complain.

When we had finished our supper, Waddie and I adjourned to the standing-room, in order to give Tom a chance to wash his dishes and put the cabin in order; for three persons about filled it, so that there was little space for one to move around. It was nearly dark, and there was a fresh breeze on the lake. We enjoyed the scene very much, for certainly there is no more beautiful region in the whole world than that which surrounded us. The hills and the precipitous rocks were in strong contrast with the water. The Ucayga was just passing the point where we lay, though on the other side of the lake. Coming from the opposite direction was a tow-boat, dragging slowly after her a fleet of canal-boats.

Waddie and I continued to pun on the bear till the last glimpses of twilight were fading out behind the hills on the opposite shore of the lake. Tom had made up our beds in the cabin, and we were thinking of playing a game of chess, which I had just begun to learn under the pleasant instruction of Grace Toppleton. The lamp on the foremast burned bright-

ly, and the little cabin looked very cosy and attractive.

“What’s that?” exclaimed Waddie, suddenly, as a yell from the fleet of canal-boats, which had just passed our anchorage, started us from the quiet of our situation. “By the great horn spoon, one of the boats is on fire!”

“That’s so!” added Tom, nervously. “What shall we do?”

“I don’t know that we can do anything,” I replied, as my companions, by their looks, appeared to appeal to me. “It burns like tinder. I think she must have petroleum, or something of that kind, on board.”

The fire blazed up very suddenly, and it was plain to me that she had some combustible materials on her deck. The hands on the other boats made haste to cast off the fasts which connected the burning craft to their own, in order to prevent the flames from spreading. At the same time, the tow-boat increased her speed to drag the other canal-boats out of the way of their dangerous companion.

“Get up your anchor, Tom. Let us go out there, and see what we can do,” said I. “The thing ap-

pears to be drifting this way, and we may be burned up if we stay here."

"My sentiments exactly," replied Tom, as he sprang to his cable.

"Stand by the jib-halyards, Waddie," I added, removing the stops from the mainsail. "Up with it!"

We were all thorough boatmen, and in half a minute we had the Belle under way. As the burning canal boat was dead to windward of us, we had to stand away from her, in order to beat up to her position. As soon as Tom had set the jib, he took the helm, while Waddie and I seated ourselves to watch the progress of the flames. By this time the steamer, having dragged the other canal-boats out of the reach of possible danger, had stopped her wheels, and was getting out a boat to visit the doomed vessel, for such she was by this time, as her deck was covered with one sheet of flame.

"Help! Help!" shouted some one from the boat.

"By the great horn spoon, there is some one on board of her!" exclaimed Waddie, springing to his feet under the excitement of the moment.

"I do not see any one," added Tom. "Of course

those who were on board left her before she cast off from the other boats. They had only to step from one deck to another."

"Help! Help! Save me!" again shouted the unseen person.

"He must be in the cabin," I suggested. "The wind drives the flame right over the hatchway, so that he cannot escape."

"What shall we do?" demanded Waddie, appalled by the prospect of a human being perishing in the flames before our eyes.

"Run up to windward of her, Tom," said I.

He obeyed, and by the time the Belle reached her bow, I had the cable ready to make fast to her stern.



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CHAPTER V.

THE RESCUED PASSENGER.

THE stern of the burning canal-boat was to windward, so that the flames were driven over the entrance to the cabin. I made fast the cable of the Belle to the bow of the burning craft.

“Now, Tom, take the wind on your port beam, and let her drive as hard as she will.”

“I see; you want to sling her round.”

“Yes. Waddie, you and I will help her with the oars, for it will be a hard pull to swing that heavy canal-boat.”

We took the oars; and, when the Belle came up with a jerk, which nearly threw us overboard, — for the wind was quite fresh, — we strained our muscles at the oars.

“Pull, Waddie!” I cried, anxiously, for I felt that the safety of the man in the cabin of the burning

boat depended entirely upon the success of our movement.

Tom helped Waddie with one hand, while he steered with the other. Though the burning boat was very long and heavy, it did not require much power to turn her, balanced as she was on the water. The sails of the Belle pulled strong, our efforts at the oars increased the force, and we soon had the satisfaction of seeing that we were accomplishing our purpose. As soon as the vessel began to turn, her inertia being overcome, the work was easy, and we whirled her on her axis like a top.

“Hold on, now!” I shouted, boating my oar. “She will swing the rest of the way without any help. Come about, Tom, and run up to her bow before the fire makes it too warm there to cast off the cable.”

“Won’t you bring my hatchet out of the cook-room, Wolf?” added Tom.

I brought a small hatchet from the cuddy, which Tom used in splitting up his wood.

The canal-boat continued to swing under the impetus we had given her. As soon as she had turned

into a position so that the wind struck her broadside, and carried the flames away from the cabin door, we saw a man rush up the steps.

"There he is!" shouted Waddie. "Bear a hand, Tom! Let her drive."

"She is driving all she will," replied Tom. "Wolf, we won't wait to untie that cable; just chop it off with the hatchet when I luff her up."

"Help! Help!" shouted the man on the after-deck of the canal-boat.

"We will be there in a minute!" shouted Tom. "Keep cool!"

"It's rather a warm place to keep cool in," suggested Waddie.

"Now, luff up, Tom, and we will get clear of the cable."

He put the helm hard down, and, as the boat came up into the wind, the cable lay across the forward deck of the Belle. With one blow of the hatchet I severed it, about thirty feet from the bow of the canal-boat, so that Tom lost only a small portion of his line. The man on deck had seated himself at the extreme end of the boat, with his legs

hanging over the water, in readiness to leap into the lake, if the flames were again driven upon him. But the combustible material seemed to be amidships, though the wood-work was now well kindled, and the great volume of the flame was at this part of the boat. Tom ran the Belle around under the stern of the burning vessel, and I fastened the boat-hook to it, as she lost her headway.

“Drop down,” said I to the person above.

He first threw a black leather travelling-bag upon the forward deck, whose contents rattled as though it were filled with old iron. With the assistance of Waddie and myself, he came down himself, and stepped into the standing-room. I picked up his valise, as Tom filled away again, in order that it might not be lost overboard when the Belle heeled over under the pressure of the sails.

“You came out of a warm place,” said Waddie, as the stranger seated himself.

“Not very warm,” he replied. “I was in the cabin, and there was no fire down there.”

“But there would have been very soon.”

“No doubt of that. There are two windows in

the stern, but, as I cannot swim, I did not like to jump out into the water," continued the stranger.

"You take it very coolly," said Tom, with a grin.

"I don't know that I was afraid of anything. I supposed those other canal-boats were close by, and as soon as I saw or heard any one, I meant to jump into the water, and let him pick me up."

"Was there no one with you on board?" asked Waddie.

"Yes, a whole family; but they were on deck when the fire broke out, and had only to step on board one of the other boats by her side. I have been travelling a great deal lately, and I was tired and sleepy; so I lay down in a bunk, and went to sleep. When the fire broke out, the men yelled, and that waked me up. I sprang for the stairs, but a sheet of flame lay right over the cabin doors, and I couldn't go through. So I shut the doors, and went to the windows. I yelled with all my might, to let the boatmen know where I was; but none of them came near me. Then I tried the doors again, and found the fire was blowing off in another direction."

"That was after we had swung the canal-boat around," interposed Waddie.

"I did not know what did it, but when it was safe to do so I went on deck."

"How did the boat catch afire?" asked Tom.

"I don't know. There is half a dozen barrels on deck, and they smelled like petroleum. Very likely some smoker dropped his match into the stuff. I heard something which I took to be the bursting of one of the barrels; at any rate, they made a jolly fire. But now I am out of the scrape, I don't know that I care."

"It won't be pleasant for the owner to have his property destroyed," suggested Waddie; and I think none of us were pleased with the selfish remark of the stranger.

The person whom we had rescued from the burning boat was a young man, not more than twenty-five. He was very well dressed, and I judged from his air and manner that he had seen the world. He interlarded his narrative with much offensive profanity, with which I do not care to soil my pages. On the whole, he did not produce an agreeable impression upon any of us.

“Have you got that man out of the cabin?” shouted a man in the boat from the steamer.

“Yes, he is safe,” replied Tom. “Why don’t you bring up your steamer, and put the fire out?”

“No use; we couldn’t put it out now.”

“Haven’t you a fire engine on your tow-boat?” I asked.

“No; it is broke down.”

I was inclined to agree with the speaker, who was the captain of the steamer, that it was useless to attempt to extinguish the fire, for the canal-boat was now one mass of flame. She was drifting rapidly towards the shore, and I was afraid she would set the woods on fire, for the bushes hung over the bank, so that the flame would be blown directly into them.

“Will you go on board one of those canal-boats, sir, or shall we put you on shore?” asked Tom, addressing our passenger.

“I don’t know. I have had about enough canal-boat for one day,” he replied, shrugging his shoulders.

“I will do just as you say,” added Tom.

“Is there any hotel around here?” inquired the stranger.

“Yes, a first-rate hotel, not far from the falls,” added our skipper, pointing in the direction of the spot.

“Then I will go there.”

“All right,” answered Tom, heading the Belle towards the shore.

“My name is Schleifer,” continued the stranger. “I am a drummer for a hardware house in New York.”

This seemed to be a satisfactory explanation to me of the nature of the contents of his travelling-bag, which had rattled like old iron when he threw it upon the deck, and which I found, when I lifted it, was very heavy.

“I got into Hitaca too late to take the boat down the lake, for I expect to sell some goods at the towns below. I had taken all the orders I could get in Hitaca a few days before; so I had nothing to do, and wanted to get to Middleport. I didn't like the idea of lying around Hitaca till the next morning; so I thought I would try a canal-boat, just for the novelty of the thing.”

“Well, how did you like it?” asked Waddie.

"I liked it well enough till the fire interfered with the tranquillity of my dreams; but I did not even get singed; so I have no reason to complain."

By this time the Belle had reached the shore at the point off which she had been moored before. The burning canal-boat had grounded just above us, on a shoal place. As her combustibles on deck had been consumed, the flames were not so fierce, and did not reach the shore.

"I suppose I'm a lucky dog," said Schleifer, as Tom lowered his sails, having made fast to a tree on shore. "My life is not insured, and it would have been an ugly investment for any office half an hour ago."

"Thank God for preserving your life," I added.

"That's all very well; but I thank my own coolness that I wasn't fool enough to rush on deck, where the fire would have made an end of me in a minute and a quarter. Do you happen to have any whiskey on board of this craft?"

"Not a drop," replied Tom, promptly. "We haven't any use for the article, and we don't keep it."

"They keep it at the hotel — don't they?"

“I suppose they do. I never called for any,” added Tom.

“Are you the skipper of this craft?” asked Schleifer, in a kind of contemptuous tone.

“I am; and the craft is a good deal better than the skipper.”

“That may be; and, if you don’t take any whiskey, I should say you were half right, at least. I should think, with so much cold water under you and all around you, you would want a little drop of whiskey, just to help keep up an equilibrium, you know.”

“I find that people who take whiskey find it the most difficult to keep up an equilibrium.”

“Every one to his fancy; but I can’t sell goods without a little whiskey. I generally carry a pocket pistol in my bag; but it got smashed against the hardware, the other day, and I’ve been dry ever since.”

“That was because you did not keep up the equilibrium,” laughed Tom. “What kind of hardware do you sell, Mr. Schleifer?”

“Iron, of course.”

"Pickaxes and crowbars?"

"Not exactly. I couldn't carry samples in my bag very well. I think I will try to find that hotel now. Did I understand you to say that you were the skipper of this boat?"

"I have that honor; and I wouldn't swap it off to be governor of the state," replied Tom.

"Do you keep her to let?"

"That's what I keep her for."

"She is a good-looking boat; but I should like her better if she carried a little whiskey on board," said Schleifer. "Haven't you just a thimbleful, say forty drops, in the medicine chest?"

"Not the twentieth part of a drop."

"How long does it take you to run from here down to Cent— down to Middleport?" asked the drummer.

"That depends on the wind."

"Well, as the wind is to-night."

"I could fetch it in four hours. The wind would be fair after I got by Priam."

"Well, skipper, seeing it's you, I will give you a five-dollar bill if you will land me in Centre—I mean in Middleport."

"Well, seeing it's you, Mr. Schleifer, I won't do it."

"Not for five dollars?"

"No, nor for ten. My boat is engaged to these gentlemen for the rest of the week."

"We will let you off, Tom," whispered Waddie.

"I don't want to be let off."

"I have an invitation from Captain Portman for Waddie and myself to sleep at his house," I added.

"Is that so? Then I will take him down to Centreport for ten dollars."

"Middleport," said Schleifer. "I will give you five."

"No; nothing short of ten for a night run down the lake. I like to sleep a little once in a while."

After some bickering the drummer agreed to give ten dollars for his passage; but he insisted upon going to the hotel first for a "drop of whiskey."

CHAPTER VI.

THE ENGLISH LORD AND THE DRUMMER.

“**I** COULDN'T go to sleep to-night without a drop of whiskey, and I must have some,” said Schleifer. “It won't take me long to go to the hotel.”

“Do you know the way?” inquired Waddie.

“No; but I can find it.”

“We are going up that way. We will show you the road.”

“I don't need any help. I can sniff a place where they sell whiskey two miles off,” replied the commercial gentleman, coarsely.

He went on shore, taking his bag with him, and made his way up to the road which led to the hotel. Waddie and I walked up to Captain Portman's house; but he was not at home, though the servant said he would return soon. He had proba-

bly gone over to the hotel, which he generally visited in the evening. We did not care to remain if Captain Portman was not at home, and we walked towards the hotel, expecting to meet him there.

“Why didn’t that fellow go to Middleport in the tow-boat, if he wanted to go there?” said Waddie, who had taken a strong dislike to Tom’s passenger.

“I suppose he was afraid of being blown up, or burned up,” I replied.

“He did not even take the trouble to thank us for saving him from the flames.”

“Probably he does not think we saved him from anything but a wet jacket,” I suggested.

“Even that is worth acknowledging.”

“These drummers live on brass, and this fellow is in the hardware line.”

“Waddie! Is that you?” called Tom Walton, as he rushed up to us when we came down the hill from Captain Portman’s mansion.

“Yes, it is I. What’s the matter, Tom?” asked Waddie.

“A young woman just came down to the boat,

and said she wanted to see you very bad," replied Tom, with no little excitement in his manner.

"A young woman! Who is she?"

"I haven't the least idea; but she has a nobby look, as I made her out in the dark. She wanted you so bad that I told her I would try and find you."

"Who can it be?" said Waddie.

"Probably Miss Dornwood," I suggested.

"But she would not be out of the hotel at this hour in the evening."

"Her relations with her guardian were not very pleasant, you know," I added.

"Well, we will go down and see her, at any rate;" and we walked towards the moorings of the Belle.

"Waddie, you must be very careful," said I, not at all pleased with the complications which seemed to be before us.

"Careful? What do you mean, Wolf?"

"If I am not mistaken, the question which we attempted to dodge once before this evening will come up again."

“What’s that?”

“When Mr. — What’s his name?”

“Mr. Overton,” added Waddie, supplying the name I had forgotten.

“When Mr. Overton attempted to compel Miss Dornwood to return to the hotel, you stepped between him and her. If the bear had not made a scene just at that moment, there might have been a quarrel between you and the guardian.”

“You are too cautious, Wolf. I wouldn’t stand by and see him abuse the young lady. Why, Captain Portman said he should interfere, and take the responsibility,” protested Waddie.

“I would interfere if there were any real abuse, Waddie; but I think it is better to wait for a pretty strong provocation before you meddle with family affairs.”

“I will be as careful as I can, Wolf; but when I see a young lady persecuted by a cruel guardian, it isn’t exactly my style to take it coolly.”

“We don’t know anything about the facts yet, and you must remember that there are two sides to every story.”

“I will try to remember it. But I don't see what she wants with me.”

“Very likely she has had some trouble with her guardian, and wants your assistance.”

“If I can assist her, I shall certainly do so. I think that Overton is a brute, whatever his relations to the lady may be.”

By this time we were near the boat, and I repeated, in a low tone, my caution to Waddie. I saw that he was very much interested in the young lady, and, aware of his impetuous character, I was afraid he would be too forward in rendering assistance to her. Miss Dornwood stood upon the shore near the boat. As we approached her, I saw that she was very much agitated, and I regarded this as altogether in her favor.

“Good evening, Miss Dornwood,” said Waddie.

“I do not know what you will think of me,” she replied, in trembling tones. “I am very much alarmed.”

“What is the matter?” asked Waddie, in a tone which was calculated to assure her.

“I wished to see you very much, for you were so kind to me that I was sure you would assist me.”

“I should be very glad to assist you, if it is in my power to do so.”

“You said you had a boat. I suppose this is the one.”

“It is not mine, though we came up the lake to-day in her.”

“Do you know where the town of Ruoara is?” asked the young lady, as she glanced around her in terror.

“I do, very well indeed. It is only eight miles from my home,” replied Waddie.

“I wish to go there very much,” continued she, earnestly.

“To-night?”

“Yes, to-night — immediately.”

“That’s very unfortunate, for the skipper has to take a gentleman to Middleport,” replied Waddie.

“O, dear! What shall I do?” exclaimed the young lady. “I must go at once.”

“Perhaps you can go in the boat with the gentleman as far as Middleport, and —”

“Who is the gentleman?” interposed she, anxiously.

"I don't know him. He is a commercial agent."

"I cannot go with a stranger," said she, shaking her head in a very positive manner.

"Am I not a stranger?"

"No; I learned, after we parted this afternoon, that you were the son of a very influential gentleman, and you were kind enough to step between me and my guardian, when he intended to lay his hands upon me."

"Who told you this?"

"The landlord. He said your friend was Captain Penniman; and I was sure, after the service you had rendered me, that you would again be my friend, and help me to get to Ruoara."

"Won't you sit down in the boat?" added Waddie, stepping on board of the Belle.

"No, I thank you. I do not wish to meet any strangers," replied Miss Dornwood. "I know you think I am very bold; but I should not have come to you if I had not known who you were."

"If you will not go with the gentleman, I do not see what I can do for you. There is no other sail-boat here."

"I suppose I must return to my prison," said she, bursting into tears.

"Do not weep," interposed Waddie, moved by her grief.

"Mr. Wimpleton, I envy the poor man's daughter who is surrounded by good and true friends," sobbed she. "I will go back to my prison."

"What do you mean by your prison?" inquired Waddie.

"My guardian sent me to my room, and then locked me in it. I cannot endure such indignities. I am going to leave him. I am going to work for my daily bread in a factory, in a shop—anywhere that I can earn enough to support me."

"Is your situation so desperate as this?"

"It is, indeed! If I had no spirit at all, perhaps I could endure it."

"There comes some one," interposed Tom Walton, who had walked up to the road, as soon as he understood the case, in order to warn us of the approach of his passenger.

Without another word, Miss Dornwood fled like a frightened fawn in the direction opposite that in

which Schleifer was approaching. Waddie, deeply interested in her case, followed her, intent upon assisting her to the extent of his ability.

"There is some one with him," said Tom, as I joined him, half way between the lake and the road.

"Perhaps you are to have two passengers," I suggested.

The drummer and the person who was with him halted in the road, and seemed to be engaged in a very earnest conversation: We could not hear a word they said, but it was evident that they had not met for the first time, and that they were not talking about the sale of hardware. It was too dark to see any more than the form of Schleifer's friend.

"You wait here," said he, after the conversation had continued a few moments.

"Hurry up," replied the other person, whose voice seemed to be familiar to me, though I could not identify it.

As the drummer approached, we retreated towards the boat.

"Hallo, there, skipper!" shouted he.

"Are you ready?" asked Tom, as we stopped, and waited till he came up.

"If it's all the same to you, I won't go down the lake to-night. I met a friend of mine at the hotel, and I want to stay with him till to-morrow."

"All right," answered Tom.

"A trade's a trade. I agreed to give you ten dollars for the trip. If you will call it five, and not go, I shall be satisfied," added Schleifer.

"I don't want any five, if you don't go," replied Tom. "I only want what I earn."

"But I am willing to compromise."

"I don't compromise. We will call it square as it is. If you are satisfied, I am."

"Well, I shall want your boat another time, and I'll make it right with you then," added the drummer, as he turned to leave.

"It's all right now."

"That's lucky for Waddie," I suggested.

"It works first rate. Now, if Waddie wants to take the lady to Ruoara, the boat is all ready."

"But where is he?"

“They haven’t got a great way yet.”

“Probably she will go towards the hotel. You follow them, Tom, and I will go up this way,” I replied, moving in the direction which Schleifer had taken.

I soon discovered the drummer and his friend walking rapidly towards the hotel. I was a little curious to know who the person was whose voice had sounded so familiar to me, and I quickened my pace, hoping the lights in front of the hotel would enable me to obtain a clear view of him. I followed them closely; but before reaching the hotel they turned in at a road which led to the stable in the rear. Before I could come up with them, they had seated themselves in a light wagon, which must have been ordered before, and drove off.

“Who are those gentlemen?” I asked of the stable-keeper, who stood in the yard with a lantern in his hand.

“One of them I never saw till now; the other is stopping at the hotel, and is a big gun,” he replied.

“I know the taller one. Who is the other?”

“He’s the big gun. He came this morning; but no one found out what he was till after dinner.”

“What is he?”

“He’s the big gun. He’s an English lord. I forget what they call him.”

“Lord Palsgrave,” I suggested.

“That’s the name. He’s a nobby fellow, and spreads his dollars with a looseness.”

“Where is he going now?”

“To Priam, I reckon. He said he should not be back till to-morrow morning; and there is to be a big dance there to-night. But I wonder he didn’t take the young lady with him, who came with his party.”

I walked round the hotel, in order to intercept Waddie and Miss Dornwood; but I saw nothing of them, and I concluded that Tom had already overtaken them. After the information I had obtained from the stable-keeper, my idea of an English lord was considerably modified. He was on good terms with a hardware drummer, which did not seem to be exactly consistent with his exalted position. But

it was possible that the drummer was a baron or a marquis in disguise, though the clatter of his hardware samples did not tend to prove it.

I continued my walk towards the lake, and presently met Waddie and Miss Dornwood.

CHAPTER VII.

MISS DORNWOOD'S STORY.

AS soon as I saw and recognized Waddie and Miss Dornwood, they turned out of the road with the evident intention of avoiding me.

"Waddie!" I called to him.

Hearing my voice, they returned to the road, assured that I was not the brutal guardian whom the young lady had so much reason to shun.

"Haven't you seen Tom?" I asked.

"No."

"He is looking for you."

"We heard some one behind us, and turned aside till he had passed," added Waddie. "What does he want?"

"The drummer has concluded not to go to Middleport to-night."

"And can you have the boat?" inquired Miss Dornwood, eagerly.

"The boat is certainly available," I replied. "But do you really wish to make a trip of thirty miles on the lake in the night?"

"I am afraid of nothing but the tyranny of my guardian," she responded, promptly.

"Where is Tom?" inquired Waddie. "We will lose no time."

"I will find him. If he passed you, he must be near the hotel."

They walked towards the boat, and I returned to the hotel, where I found Tom, and we soon joined Waddie on board of the Belle. We were all ready to start; but I confess I was very much troubled about the circumstances of the voyage. The main-sail was flapping in the fresh breeze; but I was somewhat afraid that Waddie was getting himself, and perhaps me, into a scrape.

"Are you going, Waddie?" I asked, in introducing what I wished to say.

"Certainly I am."

"I hope you will go with me. I should not feel safe without you," added Miss Dornwood.

"Won't you go too, Wolf?" asked Waddie.

"I should be glad to have you," continued the young lady.

"I am not perfectly clear in regard to this matter," I suggested.

"Pray do not stay here any longer," interposed Miss Dornwood. "If my guardian should discover my absence, I'm afraid he would come down here to look for me. Please to go out upon the lake, and I will tell you all my story. Then, if you will not assist me, we can return."

"Shove off, Tom," I replied.

The skipper ran up the jib, and the Belle, gathering headway, stood out into the lake.

"I think you are very cautious, Captain Penniman," said Miss Dornwood.

"I am sure my friend here does not wish to do anything wrong," I added.

"I will bear all the blame," said Waddie, warmly. "I think I can find friends for Miss Dornwood without going so far as Ruoara."

"Where?" I asked, curiously.

"At my father's house."

"I shall not be obliged to trespass upon the kind-

ness of your father's family, Mr. Wimbleton," added Miss Dornwood. "My friends in Ruoara will not hesitate to receive me into their house, though they know all the circumstances of my situation."

"Who are they?" I asked.

"Mr. Pinkerton and his family. Do you know them?"

"Very well indeed. Ben Pinkerton's father," added Waddie.

The Pinkertons were of the highest social standing in Ruoara, and I was almost willing to believe that there could be no harm in conveying the young lady to such friends as they were.

"Emily Pinkerton was my schoolmate at the academy, and before my father died, our two families became quite intimate," continued Miss Dornwood. "Emily was at my guardian's house last spring with her father and mother, and they know all about the circumstances."

"Do they think it is proper for you to leave your guardian?"

"Mr. Pinkerton told me himself to come to his house whenever I could not endure my guardian

any longer. I should have gone there before if I could have got away."

"Are your father and mother both dead?" I inquired.

"Both of them. I am going to tell you the whole history of our family. I am seventeen now, and Mr. Pinkerton says I am old enough to think for myself. I believe I am."

"I should say you were," I replied.

"My mother was married twice," Miss Dornwood began. "Her first husband's name was Richard Overton, and they had one son, Charles Overton, who is now my guardian. His father died when he was only four years old. Two years after his death, my mother was married again, to Edward Dornwood, my father. He was a wealthy man; but he was deformed, and in very poor health. I wish I could tell you how much I loved him, and how devoted he was to me. Even the great hump upon his back was not a deformity in my eyes. But, feeble as he was, my mother was the first to pass away, and died when I was only eight. I hardly remember her. I have no doubt she loved me as a mother should

love a child; but I know she used to scold me very severely, and I recollect this more clearly than anything else.

“My father never spoke an unkind word to me. When I did wrong, when I fretted, he looked so sad,—sometimes actually shedding tears,—that it became a positive terror to me to displease him. When he became so feeble that he could not leave the house, I spent all my time out of school with him. His eyes failed so that he could not see well, and, for hours together, I used to read books to him which had not the least interest to me. I can truly say, that I was never so happy as when with him.”

“Where was this Charles Overton all this time?” I asked, as she paused to wipe away her tears.

“He lived near us, and professed a very deep interest in my poor dear father, and in me too, for that matter. His father had died a poor man, and he was a clerk in a store. He used to come in every day, and express so much solicitude for my father and his affairs, that we were all deceived in him. We thought he was a good man, but really

all he cared for was my father's money. By degrees he won his confidence; and, though he had never treated me as a sister when we were children together, I was very grateful to him for the care he bestowed upon his step-father.

“When I was about fourteen years old, my father began to fail in health very rapidly, and it was evident to himself, as it was to the rest of us, that he could not last many months longer. With a calmness which seemed to be awful to me, he spoke of leaving the earth to join the angels in heaven. I wept bitterly at the thought of parting with him; but he suffered so terribly that I finally became reconciled to his going, for I realized that my loss, even in a worldly sense, would be his gain. Then he told me about his property, and asked me if I should like to have Charles for my guardian.

“I was fifteen years old, but I knew little or nothing about business. I was entirely satisfied to have Charles as my guardian, though I hardly comprehended what his relations with me in that capacity were to be. The next day came the lawyers, and my father made some changes in his will, which

had been written years before. In a word, he named Charles Overton as my guardian, and made him the executor of his will. I am sure he charged him to be very kind to me, and to take good care of my fortune. But my father lived nearly a year after he had settled up his worldly affairs, during which Charles was as devoted to him and me as the most loving son and brother could be. He came to our house to live, in order that he might better attend to the wants of the invalid, and resigned his situation in the store so that he could devote all his time to this duty.

“I will not try to tell you the sad story of my father’s death. He passed away, and ceased to suffer. We laid him in the silent tomb, and life was not to me what it had been before. I had lost my greatest earthly comfort, and, young as I was, I looked forward with joy and hope to the time when I should join my father in heaven. But this sadness wore away, though I have not ceased, and never shall cease, to think of my father as an angel, even when he was upon the earth. Charles Overton took charge of everything, and came into ac-

tual possession of the house in which I had lived all my life. It was more than six months after my father's death when he spoke to me about business. Then he showed me my father's will, and read it to me. He described the legal forms through which he had passed, but I could not understand them.

“My father gave him twenty thousand dollars in his will, and a fixed salary for doing the business of his estate until I was of age. After giving many legacies to charitable objects, the residue of his fortune was given to me. I was told that I was the heiress of two hundred thousand dollars. But there was one very singular clause in the will, to the effect that, if I married without the consent of Charles Overton, I was to receive fifty thousand dollars, and the residue of the fortune was to go to my half brother. I was astonished and shocked at this part of the will. I asked Charles to let me see it. Certainly it was all written down as he had read it; but it seemed incredible to me that my doting father had intended to subject me to such a condition.

“About this time Charles Overton began to exercise his authority over me. He resorted to every expedient in his power to annoy me, and make me miserable. He succeeded, too, in making me as unhappy as I could wish any human being to be, if he were my worst enemy. I could not divine his object; but, between him and his wife, I had hardly a day of peace from one year’s end to the other. I was not permitted to go into company, nor to visit those who had been my friends and companions during the latter years of my father’s life. I was not allowed even to take a walk without some one to attend me, and see that I made no new acquaintances, nor met any old ones. I may say with truth that I have been a slave now for nearly two years.

“I remonstrated and protested against this treatment; but Charles explained that he was only carrying out the wishes of my father that he should watch over me with the utmost care. It was only when I believed I comprehended his motives, that I ventured actually to resist him. I refused to obey him, and went out when I could find an opportunity. I was fully persuaded that he intended to

break me down and wear me out, so that he could get my fortune."

"But why is he so particular that you should make no acquaintances?" asked Waddie. "If you should be married without his consent, he will get most of your fortune."

"Mr. Pinkerton told me that clause would not stand the test of the law. But I do not think of being married either with or without my half brother's consent," added Miss Dornwood, with much embarrassment.

She paused a few moments, and looked over the side of the boat into the water. I realized that it was a great trial to her to feel obliged to tell this long and painful narrative.

"I have not told you the worst yet," she continued. "I was satisfied that Charles Overton wanted my money; that he was plotting day and night to obtain it. Doubtless what he termed my obstinacy worried him. He is a man of no principle whatever, and I am sure he is equal to any crime he has the courage to perpetrate. About three weeks ago, while we were at Cape May, we met Lord Pals-

grave. While we were bathing in the surf one day, a wave lifted me off my feet, and carried me out of my depth. I could swim, and was not at all alarmed; but his lordship swam out to me, and, in spite of my protest, insisted upon saving me from a watery grave. I thanked him for his good intentions, though I did not need his services; and from that time to this he has clung to me. I must tell the whole truth: he proposed to me, and I promptly rejected him, for I did not like him. My intimacy with him assured me there was not much difference between a lord and a boor. My guardian did like him, if I did not, and declared that his lordship was the only man who could marry me with his consent. I was persecuted on this subject till I was disgusted with it."

And then the poor girl burst into tears again.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STRANGE BOAT.

MISS DORNWOOD was evidently contrasting her present situation with the happiness which had been her portion during the lifetime of her father. It was not strange that she wept, as she compared the tenderness of her devoted parent with the harshness and brutality of Charles Overton. I had seen enough of him to convince me that she had not exaggerated the truth, and I was so moved by her story that I was ready to do as much as Waddie to assist her. There was nothing said, therefore, about returning to the hotel, and the Belle dashed on her course over the waves.

Tom Walton sat at the helm, drinking in every detail of the young lady's story, but still, from the force of habit, working the boat with the nicest skill. He made long tacks, and had run nearly over to

Port Gunga, so that from this point he could lay a course directly through the Narrows, about fifteen miles distant, without cramping her.

“Do you think his lordship is really a lord?” I asked, when Miss Dornwood had become quiet, and we ceased to hear her sobs.

“I suppose he is. I have no reason to doubt it,” she replied. “He showed me a letter from his father the other day.”

“Who is his father?”

“The letter was signed ‘Dumford.’ He explained that his father was Earl of Dumford, and taking his father’s second title, he was called Lord Palsgrave. I know nothing about these things, and really feel no interest in them. He talks about the nobility of England with a familiarity which indicates a thorough acquaintance, and, as I know nothing about the matter, he might do so with entire impunity. He clings to me all the time. I cannot go out of the house that he does not follow me. He has not left me for so long a time since we first met as he did to-day, when I encountered the bear. Indeed, I have not seen him since; but, then, I was shut up in my room.”

“How did you get out of your prison?” inquired Waddie.

“As soon as it was dark, I went out of the window upon the roof of the piazza, and entered one of the entries by another window. Passing down the back stairs, I came to the grove, and made my way to the place where I had seen your boat. Now, all I ask of you is, to convey me to Mr. Pinkerton’s house. I will give you no further trouble.”

“Indeed, I shall be very glad to serve you to any extent you may require,” said Waddie.

“Thank you; but I shall not have to trouble you any further, and I will pay the boatman for what he has done.”

“Not a penny for me, miss. I should blush if I could take any money for a job of this kind,” protested Tom.

“I really cannot see what motive your guardian has for compelling you to marry this lord,” I added, changing the topic. “He will consent to this, and his consent prevents him from reaping any benefit under your father’s will.”

“I do not understand it myself,” replied Miss Dornwood.

“It would be his policy to withhold his consent, whoever the person may be.”

“So it seems to me; but I hope I never shall see Lord Palsgrave again. Charles knows that I dislike him, and this may be the reason why he persecutes me.”

“Miss Dornwood, I don’t believe this Palsgrave is a lord any more than I am,” I ventured to remark.

“Why, what makes you think he is not?” she asked, astonished at my violent conclusion.

“I saw him get into a buggy and drive off with the drummer that we took out of the burning canal-boat.”

“Is that so?” inquired Waddie.

“His voice sounded a little familiar to me, as I heard him speak to the hardware man.”

“Are you sure it was he?” said Waddie.

“I did not know who it was then; but when I saw them drive off together, I asked the stable-keeper who he was. He assured me it was the

English lord. I don't think the nobility of England, as a general rule, run with hardware drummers."

"Did the drummer really go away with his lordship?" added Waddie, rubbing his hands, as though he were delighted with the fact; and I think by this time he had some idea himself of defeating the matrimonial project of Lord Palsgrave.

"I could not have been mistaken."

"A man is known by the company he keeps, and if that Schleifer isn't a scoundrel, I will never ask the privilege of guessing again. But you must be tired by this time, Miss Dornwood."

"I am, indeed, very tired. I am not strong, and the excitement of this day has fatigued me very much," she replied.

"There is a nice little cabin forward, and you shall have it all to yourself. It is now only ten o'clock, and we shall not reach Ruoara before one or two. You can go to sleep just the same as though you were on shore."

"I could not go to sleep, even if I were at home."

"Well, you can lie down and rest yourself," persisted Waddie.

After much persuasion she consented to occupy the cabin, and, as she entered, Waddie closed the doors, for there was sufficient ventilation through the blinds in them. As the Belle flew on her course, dashing the spray smartly over her bow, we sat by the side of the skipper discussing Lord Palsgrave. Certain I was that his voice had sounded familiar to me; but I labored in vain to fasten it upon any person I could recall to mind.

We heard nothing of our lady passenger, and we concluded she had gone to sleep. Tom began to gape fearfully, and I felt very sleepy myself, while Waddie was as wide awake as ever. At the suggestion of the latter, Tom and I wrapped ourselves up in our overcoats, and stretching ourselves upon the seats, went to sleep, leaving him at the helm. It was not necessary that all of us should keep awake, and Waddie agreed to call one of us to take his place in a couple of hours. I do not think my position was a very comfortable one, for I dreamed that an enormous black bear had squatted down upon my stomach, and insisted upon shaking hands with me. But my hands seemed to be tied

behind me, so that I could not comply with his bearship's civil demand; and the next best thing I could do was to struggle to free myself from the weight that rested upon me, and made me feel very uncomfortable. I continued to labor in this manner, when, instead of throwing off the bear, I smashed the boat beneath me, with a loud crash. I waked under this shock, and started to my feet to escape drowning in the lake.

"Boat ahoy!" shouted Waddie, as I stood up.

Then I realized that the Belle had actually struck something, the shock of which had become part of my vision.

"What's the matter, Waddie?" asked Tom Walton, who had been aroused by the crash.

"I ran into a boat just now," replied Waddie, straining his eyes to penetrate the gloom which surrounded us.

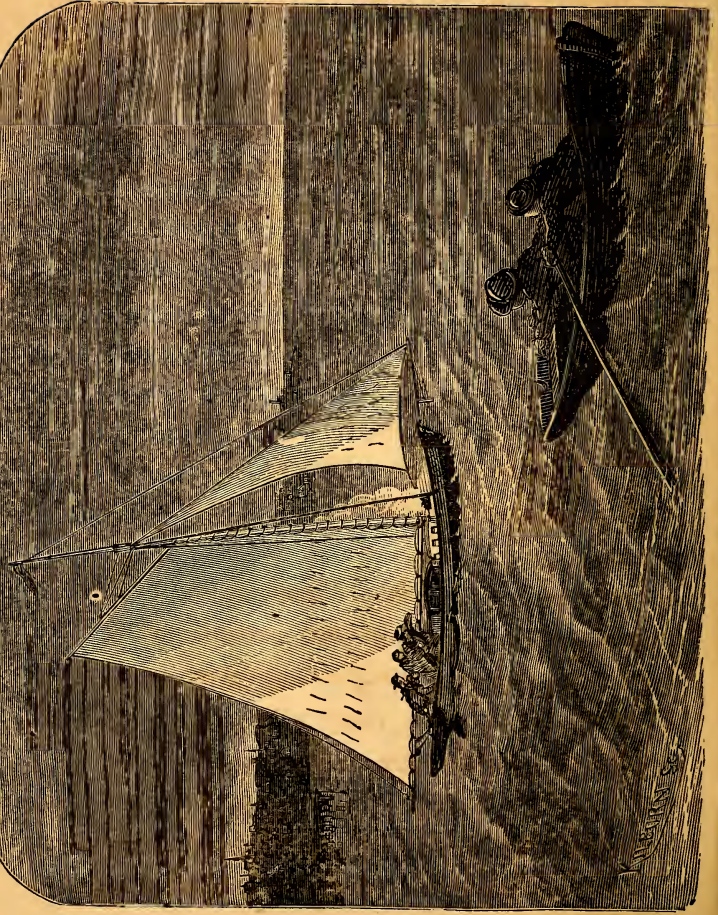
"Where is it?" I asked.

"I don't know. I can't see it, but I hear the stroke of oars."

"What boat was it?"

"I don't know. I only got a glimpse of her, as she slid off to leeward of us."





KILBURN SC

“Where are we?”

“Right in the Narrows. Finding I was running too close to the Middleport side, I let out the sheet and kept her away. In an instant I struck the boat. There were two men in it, and that is all I know about it. Hold on!” exclaimed he. “Take the helm, Tom, and I’ll light up the lake.”

Waddie had brought with him some bengola lights, with which he purposed to try an experiment in fishing. Taking one of these, he placed it on the well-trap to keep it from burning the deck, and set it on fire. The bengola blazed with a brilliant light, and the lake was illuminated from one side to the other, for in the Narrows it was only a mile wide.

“There it is!” shouted Tom, pointing to a small row-boat, in which were two persons, pulling with all their might towards the Centreport shore.

“Keep her away, Tom,” said I, earnestly. “I want to see who they are.”

Tom let out the sheet, and put the helm up; but the boat disappeared behind the steamboat wharf before we could get near enough to see the faces of the two men.

"No use; they are ashore by this time," said Waddie.

"I don't see what anybody should be crossing the lake for at this time of night," I added. "It is half past twelve."

"There is something mysterious about that boat," said Waddie, shaking his head. "The men were not pulling when we struck the boat; if they had been I should have heard them, and not run into her. When they saw or heard the Belle, they must have stopped pulling. They didn't speak, or make any sound."

"Of course they must have had a purpose in acting so," I added, not a little perplexed by the mystery which seemed to surround the movements of the men.

"Why didn't they speak after I hailed them? If they had been honest men they would have said something after the bump the Belle gave them," added Waddie, much excited.

"I am afraid there is something wrong," I continued.

"I don't know why there should be," interposed Tom Walton. "It isn't so very strange that a boat

should cross the lake in the night. Perhaps the men are going after a doctor for some one that is sick."

"Why didn't they speak when I hailed?" insisted Waddie. "Any honest man would have sung out when we ran into his boat."

"Perhaps they were frightened," suggested Tom.

"They did not pull like men who were alarmed when we saw them."

"Well, I thought they did pull just like men who were scared. They made good time."

"I'm not satisfied, and I should not be surprised to see some building blaze up in a few moments," persisted Waddie.

This remark corresponded with my own thoughts. We were both thinking of fires, for in all the towns upon the lake there had been a large number of them within a few months, all of which were believed to have been caused by incendiaries, though no one could comprehend the motives of the miscreants who set them. In Centreport and Middleport several barns and storehouses had been destroyed, and I was persuaded that the two men in the boat were incendiaries.

"Shall I head her for Ruoara?" asked Tom, while

we were discussing the matter. "We are going to leeward now."

"No; run her for the steamboat wharf at Centreport," I replied. "I am going ashore to see what those men are about."

"All right," added Tom, as he peered through the gloom to make out the wharf.

"What do you say, Waddie? Will you land with me?" I asked, as we approached the wharf. "Tom can land Miss Dornwood at Ruoara, and take us on board when he returns."

"I don't know. I don't exactly like to leave her, since she depends upon me for assistance," answered Waddie, hesitating. "If the Pinkertons should happen to be away, she might wish to take some other course."

"I'll tell you what will do just as well," interposed the skipper. "I will go with you, Wolf, and Waddie can sail the Belle down to Ruoara."

"That will fit the case exactly," replied Waddie, as the boat rounded to at the landing-steps.

Taking our overcoats, Tom Walton and I went on shore. Still we heard nothing from Miss Dornwood,

and we thought she was sleeping very soundly, if the shock of the collision had failed to wake her. We went upon the wharf, but we could see nothing of the two men.

“I wonder what boat they came over in,” said Tom, as he descended the steps to satisfy himself on this point.

“Do you make it out?” I asked, following him half way down.

“Yes, it is the Grace’s tender,” answered he.

“There will be a fire over here soon — you may depend upon it,” I continued, as we walked up the steps again. “Nothing would suit me better than to get hold of the villains.”

“I am with you there, Wolf,” added Tom, earnestly. “But, after all, it isn’t so strange that a boat should cross the lake even at midnight.”

“Certainly there is nothing strange in the crossing of the boat, but there is something very strange in the conduct of those men. It is the most natural thing in the world for men to sing out when a boat runs into them; but these men did not open their mouths. When the Belle approached them, their boat

was lying on the water, and they were perfectly silent, evidently trying to avoid being seen. If they had pulled straight across the lake, like honest men, I shouldn't have thought anything of their being out at this time of night."

"Perhaps you are right," added Tom.

"At any rate, we can take a turn around the town, where the barns and storehouses are, and see if we can find them."

We walked along the street by the side of the lake, looking carefully into all the lanes and by-places.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ROBBERY OF THE CENTREPORT BANK.

TOM WALTON and I went entirely around the town of Centreport, visiting every part where there were detached buildings which presented to the incendiary favorable opportunities for plying his infamous trade. The main street, on which were located the principal churches, the bank, the post office, the library, and other public buildings, was so densely populated that the miscreants could not work to advantage. So far as we could discover, not a soul was stirring in the place. We saw nothing of the two men, and when we returned to the steamboat wharf, Tom was rather disposed to make fun of my fears.

“We haven’t seen a spark of fire yet, Wolf,” said he, as we seated ourselves on a box, much fatigued after the long tramp we had taken.

“That’s very true, and I am willing to give it up, and to believe there will be no fire in Centreport this time,” I replied.

“It was a wild goose chase.”

“Perhaps it was; but it may be that our coming on shore has saved some building from destruction,” I reasoned. “If we did not see the rogues, they may have seen us, and kept out of the way.”

“That may be, and then again it may not be. In my opinion, the two persons in that boat were a couple of honest men who had been courting, and sat up rather later than they meant to. Probably they knew the Belle, and did not want us to know who they were, for fear they would get blackguarded,” replied Tom, with an expansive gape, which I could hear, if I could not see.

“You are ingenious, Tom, and very likely your explanation of the mystery is a reasonable one,” I added, with a yawn as expansive as that of my companion.

“What time is it now?”

“I don’t know; about two, I should think.”

“Look at your watch,” added he, striking a match to afford me the needed light.

"Half past two," I answered, consulting my watch.

"I'm as tired as a dog," added Tom.

"So am I."

"I suppose Waddie will not be back before five o'clock. He must see the young lady up to Mr. Pinkerton's house."

"I do not expect him before that time."

"Well, Wolf, I move you we take a nap," continued Tom, stretching himself. "Here's the Raven, and we can bunk on board of her."

"Her cabin is locked."

"The standing-room is not, and we can lie down, as we did in the Belle."

I approved the suggestion. We had our overcoats with us, and both of us were tough and hardy. We wrapped ourselves in the coats, and he took one seat while I took the other. Neither of us needed rocking, and we dropped asleep as readily as though we had been in our own beds on shore. By the side of the Raven, which was Waddie Wimbleton's boat, lay the tender of the Grace, in which the strange men had crossed the lake. If they intended to return to Middleport in her, they could not very well get off without waking us.

I do not know what it was that aroused me in the morning, but the moment my senses came back to me, I was conscious that there was a grand commotion in Centreport. It was broad daylight, and I heard people shouting in the street above the wharf. I waked Tom, who had not been disturbed by the noise that had aroused me.

“What’s the row?” asked he, springing to his feet.

“I heard some one shouting up in the street. I should not wonder if there was a fire, after all.”

“A fire!”

“I don’t know. We will go up and see what the trouble is. There is some kind of a row in town, at any rate.”

We walked up the wharf; but we heard no more shouting. The Grace’s tender lay alongside the Raven, just as it had been when we went to sleep, and of course the strange men had not returned to Middleport in it. Just at the head of the wharf, and within twenty rods of the moorings of the Raven, was the house of Captain Synders, the constable of Centreport. As we approached it, we saw

that officer rushing out in hot haste, buttoning his vest, as though he had not been allowed sufficient time to complete his toilet. I at once reached a correct solution of the noise which had disturbed my slumbers. Some one had been pounding at the door of the constable's house, and shouting for him.

"What's the matter?" I inquired, as we ran forward and overtook him.

"They say the Centreport Bank has been robbed," replied Captain Synders, with all the excitement of manner which such a discovery was likely to create in a dignitary of his importance.

"Robbed!" exclaimed Tom.

"Robbed!" I repeated.

"That's what they say, and I suppose it's true, for Gibson, the porter of the bank building, came down to call me. He was almost crazy."

Captain Synders quickened his pace, and we followed him to the bank. Gibson had already called Mr. Barnes, the cashier, who arrived about the same time that we did. He was terribly excited, as well he might be, and proceeded at once to examine the vault, which opened from the banking-room. The

double doors were open, as the robbers had left them, and Mr. Barnes entered, intent upon ascertaining what loss the bank had sustained. My heart beat quick, also, for I had ten thousand dollars in bonds in the bank, which had been presented to me by Colonel Wimpleton. A similar princely gift from Major Toppleton had been deposited in the Wimpleton Bank for safe keeping. I was actually worth more than twenty thousand dollars, but I could not help feeling just then that riches take to themselves wings and fly away.

The cashier made a hasty examination of the drawers in the vault. All of them had evidently been opened, and valuable papers were scattered like chaff through the little apartment. The robbers evidently did not intend to encumber themselves with any useless documents.

"All the money is gone," said Mr. Barnes, with a gasp.

"All your specie?" I asked.

"No; not all of it. I suppose it was too heavy for them," he replied, examining the boxes which had contained the gold, at the bottom of the vault.

"They have taken a great deal of it. All the bank notes are gone. They have made a good haul."

"How much do you suppose they have taken?" inquired Captain Synders.

"I can't tell; but not less than sixty thousand dollars."

"Good gracious!" exclaimed the excited constable.

"I did not believe that this vault could be opened by any burglar," added the cashier, as he turned to the riven doors.

A hole had been cut in the outer one, and screws applied by which the bolts on it had been doubled up and wrenched off. The robbers were evidently accomplished mechanics, and had probably come a long distance, from some one of the great cities, to do the job. They had entered the building through a back window, by taking out the screws in the hinges of the shutters, and then cutting through the glass to unfasten the sash.

"The men we saw on the lake did this job," said Tom.

"What men?" demanded Captain Synders.

We related our adventure in the Narrows in the

night, and no one doubted that the two strange men were the robbers.

“What sort of men were they?” asked the cashier.

“We couldn’t see them very plainly. When we had lighted the bengola they were too far off to be identified,” I replied. “We supposed they came over to set fires, and we walked all around the town to find them, if we could.”

“What time was this?” inquired the constable.

“After twelve—about half past twelve,” I replied.

“Well, what’s to be done?” said the cashier, appealing nervously to the officer.

“I will look over the vault again, and see if I can find anything that will afford me a clew to the robbers.”

We went to the vault again, and Mr. Barnes picked up the papers on the floor. Among them were my bonds, none of which had been taken, for the simple reason that the villains could make no use of them. Nothing could be found to afford any clew to the robbers. There was no stray button, piece of cloth, nor any of the tools with which they had worked.

"I don't think they had been gone long when I came," said the porter. "I heard a noise on the back side of the building when I was opening the front door."

"Why didn't you say so before," replied Captain Synders, savagely. "Have we been fooling away our time while the rascals were in town?"

"I didn't think of it till just this minute," pleaded Gibson. "I didn't think anything of it at the time, and when I went in and found the bank had been robbed, I was so scared I couldn't think of anything else."

"What sort of a noise did you hear?" demanded the constable.

"I don't know just what it was. It was a kind of a shuffling noise. Perhaps the robbers had thrown their traps out the window, and were flying round to pick them up."

"You are smart!" sneered Captain Synders. "Why didn't you go round to the rear of the building, and see what it was?"

"Because I didn't think anything at all about it," replied Gibson, who was terribly frightened by the

charge that he had failed to do his whole duty. "I don't go and look into everything whenever I hear a noise — do you?"

"I do, when a bank has been robbed."

"Well, I didn't know a bank had been robbed when I heard that noise."

"Gibson did the best he knew how," added the cashier. "If the robbers left only half an hour ago, they cannot have gone far by this time."

"That's so!" exclaimed Captain Synders, as he bolted out the door.

"Where are you going?" shouted the cashier.

"After a horse." But he did not wait to answer any questions in regard to his intended movement, and we were left in the dark.

"Synders is a blockhead," said Mr. Barnes. "He will make a great stir, and that is all he will do."

"He will not be likely to catch the burglars," I replied; for I had a poor opinion of the constable's capacity to work up a case. "It's a pity we haven't a smarter man."

We went out of the bank to the rear window, where the villains had entered the building. The

ground was much beaten and tracked, and I was soon able to identify the footprints of the two men. I found the track by which they had come to the building, and that by which they had left it. The latter only interested me, and I traced it as far as I could. It led me through a narrow and circuitous alley, which conducted to a street back of the main one of the town. I satisfied myself that the villains had approached the bank in this direction.

“Tom, whoever robbed the bank, they were not strangers in Centreport,” said I to the skipper, after the cashier had gone to secure the valuable papers which were scattered about the vault.

“What makes you think so?” asked Tom.

“Strangers could not have found their way through these back alleys.”

“Who do you suppose they were?”

“I have no idea,” I replied, still studying the ground, at the junction of the alley with the back street, in order to ascertain in what direction the robbers had departed. “I can’t think of any one who is up to a deed of this kind.”

“Here’s the track!” cried Tom. “They went down towards the steam mill.”

One of the burglars wore a boot with irons on the outside of the heels, the print of which enabled us to follow them; but when we came to a street more travelled and harder than the other, we could no longer trace it. But we were satisfied that the rogues had gone down to the lake. There were no boats below the steamboat wharf, that we knew of, and we concluded that they must have returned as they came. We hastened towards the public landing.

“There they are?” shouted Tom, as we reached a point in the street which extended along the bank of the lake from Colonel Wimpleton’s mansion, from which we could see the end of the wharf.

CHAPTER X.

THE ROBBERS SEPARATE.

TOM WALTON pointed to the tender of the Grace, in which a young man was pulling across the Narrows with all his might. He was already so far from us that we could not make him out. We ran with all our speed towards the wharf; but we were obliged to pass behind some buildings, and lost sight of the retreating robber in the boat. It was still early in the morning, and no one in this part of the town was stirring.

“I am afraid we are too late,” said Tom, as we turned the corner at the steamboat wharf.

“If we can only see them so that we shall know them, we shall have some chance,” I replied.

“There goes the Raven!” shouted my companion, as we saw Waddie’s sail-boat shooting out from the wharf.

“Who is in her? Isn't it some one after that fellow in the tender?”

“I don't know; it may be,” replied Tom, as we halted, out of breath, at the end of the wharf.

By this time the man in the row-boat had nearly reached the other side of the lake. I could only see that he was a young man, well dressed, and rather slender in stature. He had taken off his coat, and was bareheaded. The other man, in the Raven, seemed to take particular care that he should not be scrutinized by any person on shore. He wore a shaggy old coat, and a dilapidated Panama hat; but these articles belonged to Waddie, who kept them in the boat for use when he went fishing or sailing. The robber in the Raven had evidently availed himself of these garments to disguise his person as much as possible.

He was a good boatman, and handled the Raven with much skill. He had left the wharf under mainsail only; but as soon as he was clear of the shore, he ran up the jib, and headed the boat up the lake. I did not readily see why the rogues had separated at this point, whether it was to divide

their pursuers, or whether they wished to go to different parts of the country. The Raven and the tender were the only boats at the wharf, and I finally concluded that they had taken this course to prevent the sail-boat from being used in the pursuit, as well as to divide the attention of the pursuers, for I was satisfied that they were conscious of having been discovered. In order to obtain the tiller, the hat, and the coat, the man in the Raven must have broken into the cabin; but this was a trivial achievement to one who had set at defiance the huge lock of the bank vault.

“We are standing here like fools!” exclaimed Tom, as we were watching the two boats, though we had hardly wasted a minute in this way.

“We have no boat to follow them,” I replied. “But there comes the Belle,” I added, as I glanced up the lake.

The sail-boat was not half a mile distant, and we had been so intent upon observing the movements of the robbers that we did not see her before. The breeze was even fresher than it had been during the night, and she was rushing over the

waves with a huge bone in her mouth, at a speed which would soon bring her to the wharf. The man in the tender landed at the wharf in Middleport, and with his hat and coat in his hand, walked up the wharf. Though we lost sight of him, we were confident that he would be overtaken. There were but three roads by which he could leave the town, if he left it at all, and men with fast horses could make his chances of escaping very small.

“Hurry up, Waddie!” shouted Tom, as the Belle neared the wharf.

“Shall we try to follow both of them, or only one? That’s the question now,” I added.

“Both of them, of course,” replied Tom, eagerly. “I will chase the Raven in the Belle, and you or Waddie can follow the fellow that went over in the tender.”

“Good! That is the plan.”

“Hallo, there! Have you seen anything of them?” shouted Captain Synders, as he drove his horse swiftly down the wharf.

“Yes, seen them both,” I answered. “One has crossed over to Middleport, and the other is in the Raven.”

“Good gracious!” exclaimed the excited constable. “Get me a boat, and row me over to the other side as quick as lightning.”

“We have no boat; but there comes the Belle. She will be here in half a minute.”

“But I am going to chase the Raven in the Belle,” interposed Tom, who had worked himself up to a high pitch of excitement at the prospect of the thrilling race before him.

“I must get across the lake somehow,” added the officer.

“What’s the matter?” demanded Waddie, as he rounded the corner of the wharf, and headed the Belle up to the landing-steps.

“The bank has been robbed,” returned Tom, as we all rushed to the stairs.

“By the great horn spoon!” ejaculated Waddie.

“Sixty thousand dollars gone,” added Tom.

“You don’t mean so!”

“It’s as true as preaching. One of the robbers has taken the Raven, and the other has crossed to Middleport.”

“By the great horn spoon!” repeated Waddie, so

startled by the intelligence that he could only give expression to his feelings in his favorite phrase.

“Hurry up!” shouted the constable, as we all tumbled into the boat.

Captain Synders told the man who had come with him in the wagon to drive the horse back to the stable, and inform the bank people where he had gone.

“What’s to be done?” demanded Waddie, as he shoved off the Belle.

“Put me across the lake in double-quick time,” replied the constable.

“No; run down to your father’s house, and take another boat,” added Tom. “I shall lose sight of the Raven if you keep me to go over there.”

“That’s it. We have another sail-boat there, and it won’t take three minutes longer,” added Waddie, as he headed the Belle in the direction indicated.

“That won’t do,” protested the constable. “I shall lose the fellow on the other side.”

“And I shall lose the fellow on the lake,” retorted Tom.

“But I am the constable of Centreport,” puffed the captain.

“Tom is right,” I interposed. “The fellow on the other side can’t get a great way. The Raven is a faster boat than the Belle, and—”

“We will settle that question to-day,” interposed Tom. “It’s going to be breezy, and we shall see which is the best boat. That fellow handles the Raven as though he knew how; but, if I don’t beat him, I’ll sell the Belle for two cents.”

The constable yielded the point at my suggestion, and in a couple of minutes Waddie ran the boat alongside the little pier near his father’s house.

“Which of you is going with me?” demanded the constable, as he stepped ashore.

“I will,” replied Waddie. “Hold on just one minute, Tom. I have something for you.”

Waddie rushed into a building adjoining the billiard house, where he kept his property. I sprang on board of the sail-boat at the pier, and hoisted the mainsail. Tom gave an extra pull at his peak-halyards, which Waddie had not fixed to suit him.

“Here, Tom, take this. You may want to use it,” said Waddie, returning and handing the skipper a revolver—the one with which I had had some experience a few years before.

“Thank you, Waddie,” replied Tom. “Probably that fellow in the Raven has some of these playthings, and this one may come handy to me.”

“Here is a box of cartridges.”

“All right; I know just what to do with them. Is any one going with me?”

“I am,” I replied, jumping into the Belle again.

“You are the man for me, Wolf,” added Tom, as he shoved off.

The constable and Waddie pushed off the other sail-boat, and headed her towards Middleport. There was certainly a lively prospect of an exciting chase, both upon the land and the water. I had just taken the helm of the Belle, in order to permit Tom to adjust the sails with the nicest care, when Colonel Wimpleton appeared upon the shore.

“Hold on, Wolf!” shouted he. “I want you.”

“Botheration!” exclaimed Tom. “I shall never get off.”

“One of the robbers is in that boat,” I replied, pointing to the Raven.

“I want you to get up steam on the Ruoara and chase her,” added the colonel.

"I suppose I must go ashore, Tom," I continued to the skipper, as I ran the Belle up to the wharf again.

"All right; I will fight it out alone if I get near enough to the rascal," answered Tom, who always made the best of everything, however unfavorable the circumstances.

I leaped ashore, and pushed off the bow of the boat, so that the skipper was detained hardly a moment. Setting the helm, he adjusted his sheets, gave a pull at the jib-halyards, and the Belle flew off like a rocket, with the fresh breeze on the quarter.

"This is very awkward business for me, Wolf," said Colonel Wimbleton, as we started for the steam-boat wharf.

"It is awkward for all, I suppose, who have money in the bank," I replied.

"It is particularly so to me. I have to pay twenty thousand dollars to-day, and all the cash balance in the bank has been swept away," he added. "I must pay this money to-day, or be dishonored. Indeed, I would rather lose twice the amount than fail to do so."

"Very likely you can get the amount from the Middleport Bank," I suggested.

"Perhaps I can; but twenty thousand dollars is a large sum to obtain without any notice whatever. I sold some bonds the other day to provide for this payment, and now those villains have cleaned out the bank."

"They may be caught before night," I added. "I think their chances of escaping are very small."

"I don't know about that," replied the magnate, shaking his head. "If that fellow in the boat is hard pressed, he will run ashore, and take to the woods, and, having the start, he will make good use of his time."

"Tom will see where he lands, and he will follow him to the end of the world."

"Probably the other robber has a fast horse on the other side of the lake, and Captain Synders is a clumsy fellow."

"But Waddie is with him."

"Waddie has not had much experience in chasing robbers. I hope he will not expose himself, for these villains are probably well provided with pistols."

“Waddie has one of his revolvers, and Tom has the other.”

“It is dangerous business to deal with these desperate fellows, and I want a strong force to make the matter sure. I sent immediately for the engineer of the Ruoara, but found he had gone to Gulfport, and would not return till it was time to make his first trip. The fireman is getting up steam, but we had no one to run the boat.”

By the time we reached the steamboat wharf, all Centreport was aroused, and we found a crowd of men on the pier. The cashier had a party ready, and was embarking in a boat for the other side, to assist Captain Synders in the pursuit beyond Middleport. I went on board of the Ruoara, and attended to the engine.

“How long before you will be ready to start, Wolf?” asked the colonel, as the cashier’s party was about to push off.

“In about half an hour, sir, though this boiler is rather slow.”

“I must provide for my payment to-day and I will go and see Major Toppleton. Run the boat

over to the wharf on the other side when you are ready, and take me on board," added he, as he left me.

I was rather afraid his pride would not permit him to apply to Major Toppleton for assistance, even in the emergency which had so suddenly been crowded upon him; but I had no doubt the latter would be glad to serve him.

CHAPTER XI.

A LITTLE SPARK KINDLES A BIG FIRE.

BEFORE we had steam enough to start the Ruoara, her regular engineer arrived, and I was relieved from duty in this department. In obedience to the instructions of Colonel Wimbleton, I took the helm, and ran the boat over to the other side of the lake. I saw the great man of Centreport on the wharf, as we approached, and I knew him well enough to understand at once that something had gone wrong with him. He was walking, at a hurried pace, back and forth across the end of the wharf. He frequently compressed his lips and pursed up his mouth. Yet the worst I feared was, that he had not been able to find Major Toppleton, in order to make his application for assistance.

The boat ran up to the pier, and still the colonel rushed back and forth across the wharf, apparently

making mouths at the evil destiny which confronted him. He did not seem to be in any hurry to pursue the thief who had stolen his money, or even to take any notice of the steamer which was ready to do his bidding. I had not seen him in such a frame of mind for two months, and it really gave me much anxiety. If the great man was angry, he was liable to do something which would endanger the pleasant relations which now happily subsisted between the two sides of the lake.

I left the pilot-house as soon as the forward hawser was made fast, and took position on the hurricane deck, in plain sight of him, in readiness to receive his commands, whatever they might be. I looked up the lake to see how Tom Walton progressed with the chase; but both of the sail-boats had disappeared in the haze of the morning, or had gone behind the point at Gulfport. I did not think the steamer and the *posse* on board of her would be likely to render much assistance in catching the bank robber, unless she started very soon; but the colonel still paced the wharf. I observed that he cast an occasional glance up the pier, but his actions

were all a mystery to me. At last he halted near the gangway of the boat, and, after gazing attentively towards the head of the wharf for a moment, he rushed, with an appearance of desperation in his manner, on board of the steamer.

“I can't wait any longer, Wolf; cast off,” said he.

I had not the least idea what he was waiting for; but I repeated the order he had given me to the captain of the boat, who was on board, and in another moment we were headed up the lake. I ought to say that these ferry boats were a part of my charge, and their commanders looked to me for directions. The colonel remained on the forward deck, resuming his walk there with as much zeal as he had manifested on the wharf. I am sorry to say that he looked decidedly ugly, and I began to fear that he had had a falling out with Major Toppleton, and that there was more work for the young peacemakers to do.

Some one had said, within a short time, that Captain Wolf Penniman had a great deal of influence over both the magnates, and that he even twisted them around his little finger, as though they

had been boys. For my own part, I could not see it, for I was absolutely afraid of both of them—I mean, afraid of offending them in some manner. I certainly treated them both with the most profound respect, and never ventured upon the slightest familiarity with them. When I felt it to be my duty to speak, I did so. Whatever influence I had over them was really through their own sons and daughters. As I had been at times on good terms with both, I was the medium of communication between them; and it was presumed to be my influence, when it was actually that of Tommy and Waddie.

I wanted to know what the matter was with the colonel, yet I had not the assurance to ask him. But I hoped he would tell me, and, as there was no one else on board to whom he would be likely to speak, I expected him to do so. I waited a while on the hurricane deck for his wrath to subside, and then I went below, where he could see me, and where, if he wished to do so, he could mention what it was that troubled him. I passed him on the forward deck, and seated myself on the rail near the bow, on the lookout for the Belle and the Raven, which I hoped soon to see again.

“Wolf,” said the colonel, after he had gradually worked forward till he came to the place where I was seated.

I turned and looked at him. It did not appear to me that his wrath had sensibly subsided, for his under lip was projected far out beyond the upper one, and I had learned to interpret this as a bad sign.

“Wolf, I have been trying for two months to believe that Toppleton was a good friend of mine,” he added, after one of his ominous pauses.

“I have been able to believe it without trying very hard,” I ventured to reply; for an equivocal answer, under the circumstances, looked criminal to me.

“It is not so. For dinner parties, and drumming through the streets, with all the parade of friendship, he’s all right; but when you come to the real, substantial thing, it is all a humbug with him.”

“I am sorry you think so,” I replied, deeply grieved to have my worst fears realized.

“I should not think so, if I could help it,” he added, biting his lip. “I went to Toppleton and

told him what had happened, and that I had to pay twenty thousand dollars to-day."

"Of course he was willing to accommodate you," I suggested, in order to draw him out.

"Not at all. Instead of that, he began to hem and ha, and make apologies," replied the colonel, with intense disgust.

"I am very much surprised."

"So was I," added the colonel, dryly.

"But he must have some good reason," I intimated.

"What good reason can he have? Do you suppose, if he came to me under such circumstances, I would make any apologies? No! I would give him the money without winking, even if I broke the Centreport Bank."

"But what did he say, sir?" I inquired, not quite willing to believe that Major Toppleton would be behind the colonel in good intentions.

"What did he say? Why, he began to make excuses. He told me he had hastened home to pay a note of thirty thousand dollars for railroad iron, which became due to-day, and the payment would use up his entire balance in the bank."

It seemed to me that this was a tolerably good excuse, though I did not venture to say so while the great man was so excited.

“Didn’t I understand you to say that you were waiting on the wharf for something?” I asked.

“I was waiting for Toppleton. He said he would see the cashier of the Middleport Bank, and ascertain what could be done. He told me he would see me on the wharf in ten or fifteen minutes.”

“Perhaps he could not find the cashier.”

“Perhaps not,” sneered the colonel. “I don’t think he wanted to see him very badly.”

“I am satisfied Major Toppleton will do all he can,” I added.

“If he means to do so, he has an awkward way of showing it. In my opinion he is selfish, and does not act like a genuine friend.”

“I think you wrong him, Colonel Wimpleton.”

“No, I don’t! Isn’t there fifty thousand dollars in the Middleport Bank?” continued he, warmly. “Isn’t there enough to pay his note and mine?”

“I know nothing about it; but I think you and Major Toppleton need a couple of bears between you.”

“A couple of what?” demanded the colonel, sternly.

“A couple of bears,” I replied, laughing.

“Bears?”

“Yes, sir.”

“What do you mean by that, Wolf?”

“One is *bear*, and the other is *forbear*.”

“I don’t want any moral lessons, Wolf, from you.”

“Excuse me, sir; but I meant no offence.”

“You need not presume to lecture me on my duties.”

“Captain Portman presented a black bear to me yesterday, and that bear was indirectly the cause of my being here last night, when these robbers crossed the lake. Bears have been uppermost in my mind since that event.”

“Without any fault on my part, I am put in a tight place. I have no claim upon Toppleton, it is true; but, if he were the friend he pretends to be, he would help me bear my burden to-day. That is the only bear I want to know anything about at the present time. I am mortified and disgusted with myself to think I said anything to him about the matter.”

“But you did not even wait to hear what he would do, or what he could do.”

“I waited fifteen minutes, and he knew I was in a hurry. In my opinion, he did not mean to see me again. I call it shabby treatment, and Toppleton won't make anything by it. No, he won't!” continued the colonel, working himself up into a passion. “I'll tell you what it is, Wolf; I have been a fool to think that man was my friend, or that he could be anything different from what he has been for the last dozen or fifteen years. The union line won't last much longer, Wolf.”

Turning on his heel, he walked aft, shaking his head in the fury of his wrath. Certainly the relations between the two magnates were again in a very perilous condition, and my heart rose to my throat, so much did I dread the consequences of the colonel's wrath. He was an impulsive and unreasonable man. It would not be unlike him to notify the major at once that the two lines would no longer run in correspondence. I should not have been surprised, at that moment, to receive an order to run the Ucayga through to the lower end of the lake,

even without notifying the Railroad Company. Such a step was a calamity to be feared.

“Wolf, I shall put more money into Toppleton’s pocket in one year by giving him the through passengers on the railroad, than I asked him to lend me,” said the colonel, as he again came up to the place where I sat.

“I think it is rather necessary to know what Major Toppleton intends to do before you condemn him,” I suggested.

“I don’t care what he intends to do, so long as he did not come up to the mark. I shall not take money out of my pocket, and put it into his, after this.”

He walked off again, leaving me to consider how small a spark could kindle a great fire. I was afraid he would order me to notify the Railroad Company that the present arrangement was to be discontinued. He was excited now, and I wished to get out of his way before he directed me to do any disagreeable thing. By this time the boat was approaching Gulfport, and I hoped soon to see the Belle; and the sight of her would be likely to change the sub-

ject. I concluded to go on the hurricane deck; but as I passed the colonel, he stopped me.

“Wolf, I must be at Middleport at nine o’clock to take the train for Ucayga,” said he. “I must raise the money to pay the note, though I cannot be on time.”

“We have an hour to spare, sir, and within that time we shall know what is to be done,” I replied. “I have no doubt Tom Walton has given the fellow in the Raven a hard run.”

“The Belle!” shouted the captain of the boat, as we came up with the point below Gulfport.

“There they are! Tom is crowding him hard, and the fellow is making for the shore below the town!” I added.

In a short time the steamer came within hailing distance of the Belle; but the water was too shallow for her to run in towards the shore. It was decided that I should join Tom in the Belle, while a party was landed above and below to surround the robber if he took to the shore, as he plainly intended to do.

CHAPTER XII.

THE LANDING OF THE ROBBER.

THE steamer ran ahead of the Belle as far as the depth of the water would permit, so as not to delay the latter unnecessarily. I dropped into the jolly-boat, which was towing astern, with a couple of deck hands at the oars; and the moment the steamer stopped, we cast off. Pulling to a point in the path of the Belle, the men lay on their oars till she came up. Tom luffed up a little, and I sprang on board, so that she lost hardly a moment.

“Good! I’m glad you’ve come, Wolf; for that rascal is going ashore, to take his chances there,” said Tom, as I leaped aboard the Belle. “Just set up on the weather side, and keep as still as a mouse—as still as two mice.”

I took the place assigned to me, and kept as still as I was desired to be. The boat which had put

me on board returned to the steamer, and she ran up the lake about a mile, where she landed a part of the force on board. Coming about, she steamed up to the wharf at Gulfport, where she sent on shore the rest of the men. Colonel Wimpleton could not wait for the issue, and the steamer then started for Middleport, in order to enable him to raise the money to pay his note.

Less than half a mile from the shore of the lake there was a road which led from Gulfport to Port Gunga, which was to be the line of attack for the pursuers. About twenty of them had volunteered for the service, and they were to be scattered along the road, so that it would be impossible for the robber to pass this line. If this one had the money, or any considerable portion of it, with him, the chances were decidedly in favor of obtaining it in season to pay the colonel's note.

The Belle was about half a mile from the shore when I went on board of her, and the Raven was about half way between her and the land. Above Gulfport the lake was bordered for some distance by a perpendicular cliff of rocks, from twenty to

fifty feet high; but below it there was in some places a kind of shelf or beach, formed by the crumbling of the rock and earth above it. There were not many places where a boat could land when the wind was fresh, as on the present occasion, and these were hardly available to a person not acquainted with the coast. The cliff, which extended for several miles along the lake, could be climbed only in a few places. The robber's chances of getting away from us, therefore, were not first rate. And then, if he succeeded in climbing the cliff, he was sure to be confronted by the force along the road.

The Belle was doing her prettiest, and from the beginning had been gaining upon the Raven, for the wind was too fresh for the latter, though the rascal on board of her handled her exceedingly well. Tom Walton was cool enough to work the boat to the best advantage, and his whole soul was in the business he had in hand.

"You have been beating him, Tom," said I, as a splash of spray ducked both of us.

"I have gained half a mile on him since we started," replied Tom, without taking his eye off the chase.

“The fellow sees it, and understands the situation. Probably he will smash the Raven in making a landing.”

“He won’t unless he wants to do so. Let that fellow alone. He knows what he is about, and there isn’t a better boatman on the lake or in the state than he is. He’s as cool as a cucumber, and when he sees the right place to land, he’ll go ashore,” added Tom, who could not help admiring the robber’s skill, in spite of his crime.

The villain certainly compelled the Raven to do her best, and if the breeze had not been too heavy for her to carry sail, he would have run away from his pursuer. As it was, he was obliged to touch her up, and let out the sheet when the fresh flaws came, which materially retarded her progress. Both boats dashed furiously on their course towards the shore. We saw the robber stand up in the stern-sheets of the Raven, as she came within hailing distance of the land, evidently for the purpose of examining the prospect ahead. The rocks did not appear to suit his fancy, for he let out his sheet, and stood farther up the lake.

“Do you see that, Wolf?” exclaimed Tom, as the fellow put his helm up.

“I was in hopes he would try to land there, for the cliff is fifty feet high,” I replied. “And he couldn’t get ashore without smashing the Raven.”

“Didn’t I tell you he knew what he was about? Wolf, in my opinion, we are no match for that fellow, and he will get away from us,” added Tom, shaking his head significantly.

“If he gets away from us, he won’t escape the twenty men who are on the lookout for him in the road.”

“I’m not so sure of that. A fellow who is smart enough to make his way through a couple of iron doors, and sail the Raven as that chap does, can do almost anything.”

“Don’t give it up yet, Tom.”

“Give it up! I’ve no notion of giving it up. I’ll follow him from Dan to Beersheba, till the sun goes down on the other side of the Cape of Good Hope. But he’s smart, if he is a villain; that’s what I mean to say.”

“There’s no doubt of that, Tom; and we must be smart, too,” I replied.

We had gained nothing since I came on board the Belle, or not more than enough to make up for the moment lost by luffing up. The Raven was still about a quarter of a mile ahead of us. Her skipper was now sailing her along the coast, on the lookout for a convenient place to land. Under the lee of the shore the wind was less gusty, and I was not sure that she was not now gaining upon us. Out in the middle of the lake, where the sea was heavy, the Raven did not behave so well, and it was possible that the robber intended to continue the cruise under the lee of the shore.

“Wolf, he’s smart!” ejaculated Tom, after we had followed the fellow a few moments under the lee of the rocks. “He’s gaining on us, as sure as you live!”

“Do you think so, Tom?”

“I know it.”

“Then keep her away a little more, and run out into the lake, where you will get the full force of the wind.”

“That’s the idea! I was just thinking of doing that,” replied the skipper, as he followed the suggestion. “Let her slide! I’d give two and sixpence if I

only had a gaff-topsail to help her along a little more. I always intended to have one as soon as I bought her."

"It wouldn't help her much."

"Yes, it would, Wolf. One square foot of sail up by the topmast, where it would get all the wind there is going, is worth two down by the boom. That's so! By Jim Hill, Wolf, that fellow knows what he is about!"

"Of course he does!"

"But don't you see what he is up to, Wolf?"

"He is up to getting away."

"Yes; but he is not going on shore till he gets beyond the place where the steamer landed those men. That's just what he is up to now. He saw her land them, the same as I did."

Doubtless it was very important to fathom the purpose of the robber; but, as it was soon demonstrated, we were not skilful enough to do so. Tom had run the Belle out into the lake till she rolled and pitched heavily in the sea. In doing so he had increased the distance between her and the Raven, though, half a mile ahead, the trend of the coast would drive the lat-

ter out so as to compensate for the loss, if she continued on her present course. While we were comforting ourselves with the prospect of this advantage, the Raven suddenly hauled her wind, and ran by the shortest line for the shore.

“There she goes!” shouted Tom, grasping the main sheet with a kind of desperation, and putting down the helm.

“That fellow knows this shore as well as I do,” I added, as Tom headed the Belle towards the chase. “He has chosen the best place to land on this side of the lake.”

It was the spot where the steamer had landed a portion of her *posse*. There was a kind of gully in the precipice, through which the water from the hills made its way into the lake. In fact it was the outlet of a brook, which was dry, however, except in the wet season. A boat of the size of the Belle or the Raven could run into the inlet about her length, so that a person could step over her side upon the shelf of rock and earth beneath the precipice.

The cliff was hardly fifty feet high on each side of the indenture in the rock, and it was rather a difficult

task to climb up from the shelf, though a bold person could do it. Twenty rods above this point, however, there was an easy ascent to the summit of the precipice by a zigzag path up the rocks. If the robber was acquainted with the locality, as he appeared to be, he would make for this path. His boat was headed towards this landing-place, and we watched his movements with the most intense interest. As it was probable that the men on shore had not stationed themselves below this point, I was obliged to acknowledge to myself that the villain's chances of escaping were better than I had believed at any time before.

It was possible that he had discovered this available landing-place from his position in the boat, and that he was not aware of the existence of the zigzag path. He ran the Raven into the outlet of the brook, lowering the jib and mainsail as he approached the narrow opening, so that the boat lost her headway in season to prevent any injury to her hull as she grounded in the shoal water. The rascal leaped lightly on shore, with a travelling-bag in his hand, which I had no doubt contained the plunder from the bank. He paused on the shelf below the cliff,

glanced at the Belle, and then at the precipice. He did not appear to be in a great hurry, and examined the means of ascent to the land above with deliberate care. His action assured me he knew nothing of the path, and the prospect seemed to brighten.

Tom decided to land at a point below the gully, in order to save time, and to enable us to choose our own means of approaching the robber. I lowered the jib and mainsail, and Tom ran the Belle upon an abrupt gravel beach, about twenty rods below the gully. We landed, and hauled the boat as far up on the shore as our united strength would permit. I deemed this a prudent measure, after certain experience I had had of a similar nature. Tom took from his pocket the revolver which Waddie had given him, and which he had fully charged with patent cartridges on his cruise up the lake, and we hastened to the gully.

The robber was climbing the cliff, and had already nearly accomplished the ascent. The rocks at the side of the ravine had crumbled away so that the first part of the way was comparatively easy. At the top grew some bushes on the verge of the cliff. He had reached one of these, and had thrown his left arm around one

of them. He had evidently caught hold of a root of this bush, which projected over the cliff, and hauled himself up by main strength to his present position, where he seemed to be resting after his violent exertions. He had swung his travelling-bag over his shoulder with a string.

“Shall I fire?” said Tom, producing his pistol.

“No. We don’t want to kill him,” I replied, appalled at the idea of taking the life even of a robber.

Tom seemed to be of my mind, and rushed towards the cliff. I followed him. He easily accomplished the greater part of the ascent, and was almost within reach of the dangling legs of the robber, when the villain aimed a revolver at him, and fired. Tom released his hold upon the rocks, and would have fallen over backwards if I had not caught him in my arms.



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CHAPTER XIII.

TOM WALTON WOUNDED.

I WAS appalled at the calamity which had befallen Tom Walton, and deplored the want of caution with which we had conducted the enterprise. Of course we understood that the bank robber was armed, and the fact occurred to me as we approached the gully; but when I saw him suspended by the arms to the bush on the brink of the precipice, I did not consider him in condition to use a revolver. I am as much afraid of a pistol as any other prudent person, and I do not, as a general rule, think it advisable to stand before the muzzle of such a weapon when it is loaded, and in the hands of a desperate man.

If I had been called upon to express an opinion, I should have said that it was simply impossible for the robber to use his weapon. Tom and I expected to

overtake him before he could get over the brink of the precipice, seize him by the heels, and drag him down from his perch. When he came down, I intended to throw myself upon him, and choke him till he was willing to hold still and have his arms tied behind him with the cord by which he had slung the travelling-bag over his shoulder. I could not see how this nice little plan was to fail, and we began to ascend the precipice. I felt reasonably sure that we should make a victim of the villain.

I was not only appalled, but astounded, when Tom came over upon me. It was disaster and defeat at the same time, and at that moment I only hoped the robber would not take the trouble to fire again. He did not, being apparently satisfied with the mischief he had done. I was afraid Tom had received a mortal wound, and I thought of nothing but him. I was standing on the gradual ascent of the steep, where the earth and rocks had caved down from above, so that I had a good foothold, and was fortunately able to save my friend from going over backwards. I held on to him, and retreated to the level ground below.

“Good Heaven, Tom!” I exclaimed. “The villain has hit you.”

"Never mind it, Wolf. Don't make a row. It isn't bad," he replied, with a cheerful smile, as he placed his right hand on his left arm above the elbow.

"Where did it hit you?" I asked, with the most intense anxiety.

"Here," he answered, indicating the place on his left arm.

"I was afraid it had gone through your body."

"No; but it took all the starch out of my arm, so that I could not hold on to the rock — that's all."

I heard a scrambling above, and looking up, I saw the robber drag himself over the brink of the cliff. It required a tremendous muscular effort for him to accomplish the act. Without asking my advice this time, Tom raised his pistol and fired; but only the legs of the rascal were visible, and these immediately disappeared, so that I concluded he was not hit.

"I ought to have fired in the first of it," said Tom, as he restored the weapon to his pocket.

"I am sorry now that you did not; but I did not exactly like the idea of killing the man," I replied.

"But how is your arm?"

“That will do very well. It is bleeding a good deal, and don't feel first rate. But come; let's follow that fellow. I want to put one of these little pills into him.”

“No; let me bind up your arm first,” I insisted. “It may stop the bleeding. Take off your coat, and let me see what it is.”

“But the robber will get away while we are fooling here.”

“No matter if he does. You may lose your arm if we neglect the wound. Off with your coat.”

It was not so easy for him to take off his coat, but with my assistance it was removed with some difficulty. I found that the bullet from the pistol had ploughed a wound diagonally along the fleshy part on the inner side of the arm. It must have passed very near his body, and I regarded it as a narrow escape from a mortal injury. I tore off a piece of his shirt, and scraped some lint from it, which I placed upon the wound in order to stanch the bleeding, and then bound my handkerchief around it.

“That's it, Wolf. You were cut out for a doctor. It feels first rate now,” said he; but his face was paler

than usual, and I saw that he was suffering much pain.

“Come now; let’s see where that fellow has gone.”

“I’m afraid you are not in condition to chase a robber, Tom.”

“Yes, I am. I’ll follow him to the other side of sundown,” he replied, leading the way to the zigzag path. “I don’t want to kill him; but, if one of these bullets will travel faster than I can, he shall have the benefit of it. Come on, Wolf.”

Tom certainly had pluck enough—more than I should have had with such an ugly wound in my arm. I followed him up the path, and we soon reached the high ground above the lake.

“Now don’t be rash, Tom,” said I, placing myself ahead of him. “That fellow has at least five more balls in his revolver, and if we get shot, we can’t do any good.”

“My pistol will carry as far as his, I reckon, and it is a poor rule that won’t work both ways. If I see him again, I shall give him some,” replied Tom.

“Don’t you feel weak, Tom?”

“No, not much; at any rate, I’m good for ten miles.

Do you see anything of the villain?”

“Not a thing. We will go over to the other side of the gully, and we may be able to trace him.”

We hastened to the place indicated. On the brink of the precipice the ground was considerably stirred up by the violence of the robber's struggle to attain the summit of the cliff; but we could find no other trace of him. The region above the lake was a pasture, and the short grass afforded no impress of his footsteps. The country was wild and rugged, with plenty of bushes and trees to afford concealment to the robber. Between us and Gulfport there was a wood.

“We are not much wiser now we are up here,” said Tom. “What shall we do?”

“I think we had better move towards the Gulfport road. We can find some of our people there, and notify them that the robber has landed here.”

“That fellow's smart, and in my opinion he will be on the lookout for our people,” added Tom, as we moved towards the road. “He'll work up towards Port Gunga, because he will think the men are in the other direction. We shall do better if we divide; you go up to the road, and I will follow up the shore.”

“I don’t believe in separating. What could either of us do alone, if one of us should happen to see him?” I replied, not wishing to leave Tom in his wounded condition, though his plan was certainly the better one.

“One of us could follow him and keep the run of him just as well as two. There isn’t any need of looking into his pistol barrels, you know.”

“I’ll change your plan a little, and then we will adopt it. You shall walk towards the road, and tell our people the robber has landed, and I will go up the lake.”

“It’s all the same to me; but, if you are going that way, you shall take this pistol,” replied Tom, handing me the weapon. “Don’t be afraid to use it, Wolf, if you get a chance. You are a little too tender-hearted for this kind of business.”

“I will use it, if I get a chance to stop him in that way,” I answered, as I took the pistol.

We separated, and I pursued my way in the direction of Port Gunga, which was about five miles distant. Tom walked due east towards the road, where I expected he would meet some of the *posse*.

who had been landed to intercept the robber. He soon disappeared among the bushes and trees. But he was hardly out of sight before he called to me. I halted, and presently I saw him and Mr. Bradshaw, a deputy sheriff, who had taken charge of the *posse* which had come up in the steamer.

“Have you seen anything of him?” asked the sheriff, as we met near the gully.

“Not since he climbed up the cliff,” I replied.

“You ought to have fired at him the moment you saw him,” added the officer. “You mustn’t mince matters with such fellows. It is better to shoot him than to be shot by him.”

“We did the best we knew how,” interposed Tom.

“Of course you did. However, we are pretty sure of him, for I have sent our folks up the Port Gunga road, and they are certain to head him off. I wouldn’t give two cents for his chances,” continued Mr. Bradshaw, confidently.

“Well, what shall we do?” demanded Tom, impatiently.

“As you are hurt, you had better take your boat and go home,” added the officer.

"Not I," protested the plucky skipper. "I'm going to stay to see the fun, and help bag the game."

"Just as you like, but you must look out for your arm."

"I'm all right. Wolf fixed my arm as good as a doctor could."

"Well, we will follow up towards Port Gunga, and see that the robber does not take the back track when he finds our folks in front of him," said the sheriff, as we started in the direction indicated. "I waited on the bluff here till I saw where the rascal was going to land, and then I stationed my men where they could trip him up."

"Why didn't you bring them up to the cliff, and head him off when he landed?" I inquired, disposed to be critical in my turn.

"Why didn't I? Because our people were more than a mile from here," replied the sheriff. "You see we expected he would land half a mile farther down the lake. I had to go and tell them where to look for him; and though I have been in a hurry, I have but just returned."

"If you had been on the cliff when the fellow landed, you could have fixed him," I added.

"But I didn't know what he was going to do till he did it."

"You did the best thing you knew how," said Tom.

"Of course I did."

"That's just what we did; and I don't think it pays to tell what might have been done," continued Tom, who was always disposed to take things as he found them, and blame no one for what could not be helped.

"It will all come out right. We are sure of him," said the sheriff. "But I think we had better spread out a little. You take the shore of the lake, Wolf; you go to the left, Tom; and I will take a course between you. If either of you see him, sing out."

This was good policy, and it was promptly adopted. I walked over to the cliff by the lake, and, following the shore, I soon reached a high point of land, which commanded a view for a considerable distance. I halted to take a careful survey of the region,

hoping I might discover the fugitive; but I could see nothing. There was a tall tree on the top of the hill, which I climbed in order to obtain a still better view. I could see Tom and the sheriff, but no one else. I began to fear that the robber understood the situation better than we supposed, and had adopted some plan which had not been anticipated by any of us. So far, I surveyed only the region which the fugitive was expected to traverse. Before descending the tree, I turned my gaze in the direction we had just come.

I saw the robber, and called with all my might to Tom and the sheriff.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE ROBBER TAKES THE BACK TRACK.

I WAS never more vexed and disconcerted in my life than when, from the tall tree on the hill, I discovered the robber. I think the tones in which I yelled to Tom and the sheriff betrayed the disgust I felt at the unsatisfactory situation. The officer's confident prediction was set at nought, for the robber had evidently not gone fifty rods from the point where he landed and climbed the cliff. As Tom had so often suggested, the fellow was smart, and knew what he was about.

When I saw the robber, he was on the shelf below the cliff where he had landed, in the very act of hoisting the mainsail on board of the Raven. He worked rapidly, yet with a kind of deliberation and care which required nothing to be done over a second time. His object in landing may have been simply

to get rid of his pursuers on the lake, though it was possible he had ascertained the impracticability of escaping in the direction he had apparently chosen. But his operations looked to me just like a flank movement. He had seen the steamer land a force, and then depart down the lake. Being closely pursued by the Belle, he had landed to balk Tom and me; and now, having sent all his pursuers on shore, he had them just where he wanted them. He could now cross the lake in the Raven, and make his escape on the other side. It looked to me just as though we had lost him, and I did not believe the money in the rogue's travelling-bag would be used that day to pay the colonel's note.

The robber hoisted the mainsail, and then the jib, of the Raven. Then, with a sinking of the heart I saw him hasten towards the place where the Belle lay. I understood his purpose, and I trembled for Tom's boat. Of course he foresaw that it would be used to pursue him, and he intended to set her adrift, or disable her so that she would not be available for use against him. I saw him put his shoulder to her stem, and attempt to push her off. I concluded

from this that he intended to tow the Belle out into the middle of the lake, and leave her there, or possibly scuttle her.

He made a desperate effort to shove her off the ground, but without success. Tom and I had hauled her nearly out of the water, and she was too heavy to be launched again by one person. I fancied that the fellow swore some in his disappointment, and I congratulated myself upon the happy thought which had induced me to haul her so far out of the water. I wondered what the fellow would do next, for I could not believe he would leave while the Belle was in condition to pursue him. I was curious to know what he would do next; but I was already blaming myself for staying so long in the tree, and I descended. Before Tom and the sheriff could reach me, I was running with all my might towards the zigzag path.

I soon reached a point where I could see the operations of the robber again, which had been hidden from me after I descended the tree. He was running from the Belle to the Raven. In his hand he carried the travelling-bag, which he appeared not to

leave behind him for a single instant. But then, to my intense mortification, if not horror, I saw a dense smoke rising from the cuddy of the Belle.

The villain had set her on fire!

Tom kept a supply of shavings and light kindlings in the cook-room, and there was a tin match-box attached to the mast. The scoundrel had found everything convenient for the execution of his vile scheme, and the beautiful Belle was in imminent peril of being totally destroyed. I had reached the head of the zigzag path when I discovered the fire, and I was hopeful that I might be in season to extinguish it before the boat was entirely disabled. The robber leaped into the Raven, and pushed off with a celerity which seemed to insure his safety.

I rushed down the steep path to the shelf below. I wanted to do some desperate thing, for I was so vexed I could hardly contain myself. I had the revolver which Tom had given me in my hand, and I discharged it at the rascal in the Raven; but I might as well have fired at the moon, for the pistol would not carry half the distance. The robber took no notice of me, and did not even condescend to

return my shot. He let out his sheet, and the Raven went off flying, with the fresh breeze nearly aft, and by the time I reached the gully, he was forty rods from the shore.

Though I had nearly exhausted my breath in running, I did not abate my speed till I reached the Belle. I leaped on board, and seized the bucket which was under one of the seats. I dashed several pailfuls of water into the cuddy, which put a quietus on the fire. The robber had simply lighted the shavings in the box which had been built in the head. Hardly more than two minutes had elapsed from the time the fire was set till I reached the Belle. The combustibles in the wood-box blazed furiously; but the fire was confined principally to them, though I found the ceiling and the under side of the deck planks were charred. With a bucket of water and a dipper, I put out every spark of fire.

I could not push the boat off alone, but I hoisted the sails, so that she would be ready to start as soon as Tom and the sheriff arrived. By the time they were coming down the path, I had rigged the pump, in order to remove the water I had thrown into her in putting out the fire, as soon as she was under way.

“Take hold here, Mr. Bradshaw!” I shouted, when the sheriff and Tom came within hail of me.

The official was puffing like a grampus, and he looked as thoroughly disgusted as a deputy sheriff could be. He put his shoulder to the bow of the Belle, and we shoved her off into the lake. Tom sprang on board, and took his accustomed seat at the helm. The officer was placed on the port side, and I took position at the pump which I had rigged for use, after I had shoved the boat clear of the shore. She filled away, and we started about a quarter of a mile behind the Raven. If there was any difference at all in the wind, it was stronger than it had been earlier in the morning, and this fact improved our chances.

I had made fast the sheets, so that for the present Tom had nothing to do but steer. He said nothing about his wound, but I could see that it gave him much pain, and I hoped I should be able to induce him to abandon the pursuit when we reached the other side of the lake, if the robber led us in that direction.

“This is a pretty kettle of fish,” said the sheriff, as soon as he had recovered his wind.

"I told you that fellow was smart," replied Tom, with his gaze fixed steadfastly on the Raven.

"How in the world did he get back here without our seeing him?"

"We did not look where he was."

"Where did you first see him, Wolf?" asked the officer.

"He was on the shore here, getting the Raven ready to be off. I shouldn't have seen him if I hadn't climbed a tree."

"It was lucky you thought of that. But where was the fellow while we were beyond the cliff?"

"In my opinion he has not been fifty rods from the place where he landed," I replied. "There are plenty of places among the rocks where he could hide. I think it is very likely he concealed himself in the gully, and as soon as he found we were at a safe distance from him, he concluded to cross the lake, where there is no one to pursue him."

"He's smart," repeated Tom. "That will do, Wolf; don't pump any more. You keep her wabbling so that she don't do her best."

"Let me take the helm, Tom," I suggested. "I'm afraid you will make your arm worse."

"No, I thank you. I can get as much out of the Belle as anybody else; but you may stand by the sheets, if you like, for I can't use my left arm very well."

"Just as you say, Tom," I answered, taking a seat by his side, where I could reach the sheets.

"Now keep still, and don't move one of your little fingers," said Tom. "I'll give him some. If I don't, the Belle isn't a lady. Let out that jib-sheet about an inch and a half, Wolf."

"All right," I replied, obeying the order. "You are putting a fine point upon it, Tom."

"I must have her just so when she does her best. Mr. Bradshaw, will you move forward about six inches? That's it; now she is just as I want her. Don't she spin!" exclaimed Tom.

"She is doing first rate, and so is the Raven."

"Wait a bit till she gets out a little farther. She will have to duck under when she gets the full weight of the breeze. By the way, Wolf, is she burned much in forward? I didn't stop to look in."

"Very little. I think you can make her as good as new in half an hour," I answered. "The robber

spent some time trying to shove her off, before he thought of setting her on fire. I was just at the path when I saw the fire. It had not been burning more than two minutes when I threw on the first bucket of water."

"Now she is getting it savage," said Tom, as the wind drove the Raven down to her gunwale in the waves. "See that! He had to luff her up. He lost a little on that."

Both boats had the wind on the quarter, and the Raven was leading the way directly across the lake to High Bluff, just below Priam. She was jumping up and down on the waves like a feather, and it was evident enough that she could not carry all sail. Her skipper had been obliged to luff her up so as to spill the mainsail, and then we saw that he had let his jib-sheet run out so that the head sail did not draw. As soon as the flaw had spent itself, he kept her away again, with the jib still shaking.

"It was a great mistake that the steamer went back," said the sheriff. "If we only had her here, she would make short work of that boat."

"Don't say anything more about mistakes, Mr. Bradshaw," replied Tom.

"Well, I think it was a mistake to let her return," persisted the officer.

"If that steamer had been out here, the robber would have taken some other course. We have all made mistakes enough, but we have done the best we could, and it's no use for the pot to call the kettle black."

"Do you see what that fellow is up to now?" I interposed.

"I think I do," replied Tom. "He sees the gully on the upper side of High Bluff, and, if I mistake not, he is going to run in there."

"If he does, that will be his last blunder," I replied.

"Why so?" inquired the sheriff, who was not familiar with the locality.

"He can run his boat into the gully on either side of the bluff; but he can no more climb up to the high land above than he can shin up a rainbow," said Tom. "I only hope he will run in there."

"He may find a way to get out of the gully," I suggested.

“He can’t do it. It isn’t in the power of man to get up.”

“But you know there is a crooked path to the top.”

“That’s very true; but the path is just on the side of the lake, and you can’t reach it from the gully on either side. If he strikes the middle of High Bluff on the lake side, he can go up. If he runs into the gully, he can’t,” answered Tom.

The Raven was running directly towards High Bluff. If he did not know of the path to its summit, he would not be likely to suspect its existence from anything he could see; and we waited, with intense anxiety, to ascertain what course he intended to take.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ROBBER IN A TRAP.

IN a short time we were satisfied that the robber intended to run the Raven into the gully on the upper side of High Bluff. Certainly no more inviting prospect could have been desired by a man in his situation ; for the entrance was broad and free from peril, promising a good landing-place to the voyager, as, indeed, there was, though his troubles would commence after he left his boat. Tom had explored the locality thoroughly, and was sure that the man could not get out of the gully.

The battle between the friends of Tommy Topleton and the rebels had been fought at High Bluff, as detailed by my friend Ned Skotchley, and the tradition among the students was, that the gully was impassable except by the bridge, and that its sides were absolutely perpendicular. If the robber

would favor us by running into this trap, we felt reasonably certain that we should be able to bag the game, although I could not help dreading his pistol, when we drove him into close quarters. I did not wish to be shot myself, and I was equally averse to having so good a fellow as Tom Walton shot again.

“There he goes into the south gully!” exclaimed Tom, as the Raven passed clear of the foot of the path to the summit of the bluff. “We have him now.”

“Not quite,” I suggested.

“I am sure a man can’t climb up the side of the gully,” protested Tom.

“That fellow has a bag full of tools, which he used in breaking into the bank.”

“What good will tools do him?” demanded Tom. “Will they help him shin up a rock?”

“Perhaps they will. I think, if I had his traps, I could get out of the gully; and I don’t believe in trusting anything to luck this time. We must try and be as smart as that fellow is, and make no mistakes.”

"I don't see how he could get out of that place, even if he had a whole chest of tools," persisted Tom. "He can only come out the way he went in. That is the only way I could ever get out of that hole."

"The robber had a long cord, with which he slung his bag over his shoulder. He used only one end of it, and it may be fifty feet long, for aught I know. There are plenty of stout bushes, no doubt, hanging over the hole."

"That's so; and the tree that Brisc e's fellows crossed upon still lies across the gully."

"Exactly so. And how deep is the gully under this tree?"

"Twenty or twenty-five feet, I should say."

"Then he can tie a stone to the end of his cord, throw it over the trunk of the tree, and let it come down on the other side. That's easy enough— isn't it?"

"I should say it was," replied Tom, fully comprehending my suggestion.

"Then, if he can't go up the cord hand over hand, he can fix some sticks in the line, and go up

comfortably. But very likely the fellow has a rope-ladder in his bag."

"I guess he wouldn't stop to put any rounds in his ladder," laughed Tom.

"He has chisels and such things in his bag, at any rate. He could stick these into the chinks of the rocks, and go up on them without much trouble, and without much loss of time. No, Tom; we must be ready to head him off when he tries to get out of the gully."

"Yes; but if we leave the boat, he will serve us the same trick he did on the other side," said Tom.

"We will make no mistakes this time. Run for the foot of the path, Tom. Shall I take in the jib?"

"Yes, take it in, Wolf," replied Tom, for we were within a few rods of High Bluff.

I lowered the jib, and made everything snug forward.

"Now let go the mainsail-halyards," added the skipper; for, as the wind was blowing directly on shore, we were obliged to take in all sail.

I took the boat-hook, and fended off as the Belle grounded on the beach.

"Now what's to be done?" demanded Tom, nervously.

"Let Mr. Bradshaw go on the bluff," I continued.

"What, alone?" asked the sheriff.

"Why not? I am willing to go alone," I replied.

"You will have all the advantage of the robber. If he attempts to climb up, you can knock him, even without being seen yourself. All you have to do is to keep yourself in a safe position, and watch him."

"What are you going to do?" inquired the officer, apparently not very well satisfied with the arrangement. "Do you mean to make me fight it out alone?"

"Just as soon as the robber leaves the Raven, we are going to drag her out of the gully, and put her where he can't get at her again. That's the idea, and we have the worst part of the work to do."

"It won't take both of you to do that."

"Tom has but one arm to help himself with, and can't do this job alone. If you are afraid to go upon the bluff, I will go, and you may help Tom take the Raven," I replied.

"Afraid! I am not afraid."

"Then hurry up, or the fellow will get out before you are in position to do anything."

"Which way do I go?" said he, stepping on shore.

"Follow the path, and when you are on the bluff, move to the gully on the left, and then continue till you can see or hear the fellow," I replied, hoisting the mainsail of the Belle again. "You can't go wrong, and you will be as safe as though you were at the other end of the lake."

"I think a man who talks as big as he does ought to have a little more pluck," said Tom, as the sheriff disappeared in the windings of the steep path.

"I don't blame him much. It isn't pleasant to be shot."

"I don't think it is; and I ought to know as well as any of you."

"That's so, Tom. You are the hero of this enterprise."

"Pooh!" snuffed Tom. "Flatten down that mainsail, Wolf."

"Ay, ay! down it is," I answered, hauling in the sheet, and crowding off the head of the boat.

The skipper ran the boat out into the deep water, and then continued up the lake till the Belle had reached the upper side of the gully, where we could see the position of the Raven.

“Now, steady, Tom. We are not going into that fellow’s pistol barrels, you know. Luff her up, and let us see where he is before we go in.”

He threw the Belle up into the wind, out of pistol range of the Raven. The latter had grounded where the gully contracted its width. Her sails had not been lowered, for the robber evidently intended to abandon her at this point.

“Do you see the rascal?” asked Tom.

“No; he isn’t in sight; but he may be in the cuddy.”

“I guess not. He wouldn’t box himself up in such a place. He has left her.”

“Probably he has; but we will make sure of it before we go in.”

From the point where the Raven had grounded there was a gradual ascent in the ravine, down which flowed the waters of the brook; but there was room enough on the bottom to walk dry shod round to

the deep water on the other side. We concluded that the robber had left the boat, and gone to the upper part of the gully, to find a place where he could reach the ground above. We waited long enough to satisfy ourselves that he was not in the boat, and then stood in towards the head of the gully. In a few moments we reached the Raven. She was deserted and empty, and I lost no time in pushing her off. Taking her painter on board of the Belle, we towed her out into the lake.

“That job is done, and I don’t believe the robber will sail in the Raven any more to-day,” said Tom.

“Now what shall we do with her?” I asked.

“We will anchor her just as far from the shore as her cable will reach bottom.”

This was less than a quarter of a mile from the bluff, and we soon had her anchored where it was impossible for her to be reached by the robber.

“I don’t think we have made any mistake this time, Wolf; though, if we have, we won’t say anything about it,” said Tom, as we ran towards the shore again.

"Perhaps not; but we haven't captured the robber yet," I replied.

"We know where he is, at any rate."

"That's so. If the sheriff keeps both eyes open, he won't get out of the trap. But he will shoot any of us who come within reach of his bullets."

"Well, we won't go within reach of them, then," added Tom. "But what shall we do with ourselves now?"

"I don't know that we can do anything better than to cruise up and down off the mouth of the gully."

"That won't do any good."

"I don't know about that. The rascal might find some logs in the gully, and make a raft, if we don't keep watch of him on this side. How does your arm feel, Tom?"

"It aches; but I can stand it first rate."

"I may as well go on the bluff, and see what Mr. Bradshaw is about, if you can run the Belle off the gully alone."

"O, I can! I could work her up to Middleport without any help."

"Then I will go ashore. You might anchor off the gully."

"No. I will stand off and on, where I can see the fellow if he comes in sight."

The Belle was run up at the foot of the path to the bluff, and I landed. The boat worked well under the mainsail alone, and Tom stood off with this sail only. I made my way up the steep path, and soon reached the high ground. I discovered the sheriff over by the bridge which led from the bluff to the road. He was lying on the ground, and, as I approached him, I saw him glance over the cliff into the ravine. He had his pistol in hand, and was trying to get a shot at his intended victim.

"Where is he?" I asked, as I joined the officer.

"The last I heard of him, he was down here," replied the sheriff, pointing down into the ravine.

"What is he doing?"

"I don't think he is doing anything just now. Between you and me, I believe I wounded him."

"I didn't hear you fire."

"I have popped at him twice. I could hear every step he took, and I followed him all around the

bluff. I got a sight of him twice, and fired both times."

"What is he doing?"

"Probably he is keeping himself in a safe place. I haven't heard anything of him for some time."

"Isn't he at work in some other place?"

"No; I don't think he can move without my hearing him."

"We will stir him up a little," I added, taking a good-sized rock, and rolling it over the precipice.

I heard it drop upon the rocks below, but no other sound came up from the chasm.

"That's a good idea. I didn't think of that," said the sheriff, as he proceeded to roll rocks into the abyss, which, however, appeared to produce no effect upon the robber, at least so far as dislodging him was concerned.

"I will cross the gully," I continued. "Then we shall have one on each side, and he cannot so easily conceal himself."

"Cross the gully!" exclaimed the sheriff. "How can you do that?"

"There is a bridge," I replied, pointing to it.

“Yes; but the moment you show yourself on that bridge, the villain will put a bullet through your brains,” added the officer.

“I will see that he is not in position to do that before I cross.”

I crawled upon my hands and knees to the brink of the abyss, and assured myself that the robber was not where the sheriff supposed he was. I then crossed the bridge, and began to move in the direction of the tree which lay across the chasm. I had not taken ten steps before a bullet whizzed uncomfortably close to my ears. Luckily it did not hit me; but, deeming discretion to be the better part of valor, I was not ashamed to lie down upon the ground.

CHAPTER XVI.

SHOWERS OF ROCKS.

STEALING a cautious glance over the brink of the precipice, I discovered the robber coiled up under a projecting rock, about five rods from the place where the sheriff had been looking for him. It was ticklish business, though, after I had heard one bullet whistle by my ears, I felt more like a veteran, and found my courage increasing. Still I was careful not to expose my head again to the robber's aim, for I had a certain regard for my head, and the contents thereof, which made me rather tender of it. It may not have been a very good head, but it was the best one I had, and I did not like to have it damaged, for no one could give me another if I lost it. Besides, I was afraid it would hurt Grace Toppleton's feelings, as well as my own, to have a hole through my head.

I lay upon the ground, and did not deem it prudent to attempt to obtain a second glance at the robber at once. But I kept this position only long enough to consider what I should do next. I crawled back a little way from the ravine, where I could lift my body up without being seen by the villain. I then made signs to the sheriff on the other side to indicate to him the precise location of the fugitive. He understood me perfectly, and, guided by my signals, he advanced to that part of the bluff directly over the robber's head. When he had reached the right spot, I nodded my head to signify the fact.

The bluff was well supplied with rocks, and the sheriff followed up the tactics I had suggested, by rolling them over the brink of the precipice. It was evident enough to me that the robber could not stand this sort of treatment for any great length of time; for, though none of the rocks thrown into the chasm were larger than a man's head, they were heavy enough to smash a man's skull after falling from fifteen to twenty feet. Of course the chances of hitting him with stones rolled blindly into the ravine were not very good; but, if we followed up

the shower, he was in danger of being hit sooner or later.

“Pitch them in, Mr. Bradshaw!” I shouted. “Give him plenty of them.”

“Where is he now?” asked the sheriff.

“He isn’t far from you. Let him have a shower of them,” I added.

Taking a position myself far enough from the gully to be out of reach of the robber’s pistol, I began to help my companion on the other side, and for a few minutes we rained down the rocks into the chasm with a zeal which threatened to bury the victim beneath them. But, as we heard nothing of him, I concluded, after a time, that he had changed his position, or that his head had been broken, and we suspended the assault when we were tired of the hard work it involved.

I then crawled up to the chasm as close as I dared to go, and listened attentively for any sound which might indicate the robber’s presence; but it was his policy to keep entirely still, and I obtained no information. The sheriff did the same thing on his side of the gully, and we occasionally glanced

at each other for intelligence. As we continued the search, and our excitement increased, both of us became more venturesome. We were soon reminded again of the folly of exposing our heads to the fire of the desperado in the chasm. I saw the sheriff dodge, and heard the crack of a pistol in the chasm.

“All right!” shouted Mr. Bradshaw to me. “Nobody damaged. He’s right under you, Wolf.”

“I know where he is now,” I replied; and I renewed the assault with a volley of rocks.

The sheriff did the same, and there was a heavy shower of stones into the abyss. We followed it up for half an hour, throwing the missiles in different places for several rods, so as to cover any change of position the robber might make. But the labor was heavy, and seemed to be unprofitable, while we were working in the dark. Making a signal to the officer to continue the assault on his side, I walked down to the bridge, where I could look into the chasm, and be out of the reach of a ball from the robber’s pistol. From this secure position I obtained a full view of the rascal. He was crouching under the overhanging cliff, at least five rods from the place where the sheriff was throw-

ing over the rocks. The desperado raised his pistol, and fired as soon as he saw me; but I knew the weapon would not carry half the distance, and I was brave enough not to flinch.

I was tired of carrying on the war in this blind manner. I had been on the bluff over an hour, and nothing had been accomplished. I crossed the bridge, and walked up to the place where the sheriff lay. I had an idea, which I hoped would bring matters to an issue.

"Hold on, Mr. Bradshaw," said I, as I approached him. "You are wasting your ammunition. The fellow is a hundred feet from you."

"This is hard work," replied the sheriff, wiping the perspiration from his brow.

"Yes, and almost useless. I don't believe we have hit him a single time."

"I thought he must be smashed to jelly by this time."

"No; he is crouching under an overhanging rock, out here," I added, pointing to the place where I had seen him.

"Hold on, then, and I will give him some more," said the zealous officer.

“No, let him rest a few minutes. One of us must keep watch of him at a safe distance from his pistol,” I continued, picking up a little stick from the ground. “Let us have some signals. I will go down where I can see him, and direct you so that you can throw the rocks in where he is.”

“Good! I like that,” replied the officer.

“When I raise this stick, it means farther from me; when I lower it, nearer to me. When I carry it out to the right, it means on your side of the chasm; when to the left, on the other side,” I proceeded, suiting the action to the word.

“I understand. Up means farther off; down, nearer to you; right, nearer to me; left, farther from me. That’s a good idea, Wolf, and we shall smash him this time.”

“And when you are in the right place I will raise both hands,” I added.

I returned to the bridge, and looked for the robber again. He was not in the place where I had last seen him, and I concluded that, as he had explored the gully from the point where he landed, he had gone in the direction of the fallen tree over the chasm.

Taking the side of the gully opposite that on which the sheriff was, I followed it in the direction of the tree. There was a turn in the gully, and I was obliged to fall back into the road which lay near it, in order not to expose myself. I soon reached a point where I could see the fallen tree. The robber was directly under it, busily at work doing something which I could not see.

I raised my hand with the stick in it as high as I could, to indicate to the sheriff that he had a considerable distance to go. He increased his speed, and when he reached the tree, I raised both hands, the signal that he was in the right place. But by this time he needed no telegram from me; for, precisely as I had suggested that he would do, he threw his cord over the trunk of the fallen tree. The officer saw the line, and taking position at a safe distance, he began to pour in the rocks with a vigor which threatened to annihilate the robber, and bury him beneath the *débris*. I had a fair view of the whole scene. The desperado was trying to climb up his rope, and had actually begun the ascent, when he suddenly dropped upon the ground. It was plain enough to me that a rock had hit him.

“Hold on!” I shouted, at the top of my lungs, for I did not wish to have the fellow unnecessarily injured.

The sheriff promptly suspended his operations, and I ran with all speed to the fallen tree. Mr. Bradshaw lay down on his stomach, and crawled towards the chasm. As I approached, I saw him retreat a little, which assured me the fugitive was not killed.

“He hasn’t got enough yet,” said the sheriff, as I arrived on the other side of the chasm; and he immediately launched another rock into the abyss.

“Hold on!” shouted the robber.

“What do you want?” demanded Mr. Bradshaw.

“Don’t throw any more rocks down,” replied the rascal, in a tone which indicated that he was in pain.

“You have broken my shoulder now.”

“Do you surrender?” called the sheriff.

“Yes.”

“All right; throw up your pistol, then.”

“I can’t throw it up—my shoulder is broken,” answered the robber.

I happened to have a fish-line in my pocket, one end of which I threw into the chasm.

“Tie your pistol to this line,” I added, “and I will haul it out.”

I heard him moving in the gully, and I crept forward to a point where I could see him. He was tying the pistol to the fish-line.

"Pull it up," said he.

I drew up the revolver, and put it in my pocket. I then dropped down the line again, and directed him to send up his other pistol. He persisted that he had only one, and I told him to send up his cartridges, and any knife he had about him. He attached a box of cartridges and a small bowie-knife to the line, which I drew up.

"Now come up yourself," said Mr. Bradshaw. "But I want you to understand, if you attempt any treachery you are a dead man."

"I can't get up," replied the robber. "My shoulder is broken."

"If his shoulder is broken, he can't very well shin up that rope," I added.

"How shall we get him out?" asked the sheriff.

"We can take him off in the boat," I replied. "Indeed, that's the only way we can get him out, unless we hoist him out with his line."

"As we must return to Centreport in the boat, that will be the easiest way," replied the sheriff.

I crossed the chasm on the trunk of the tree, and, after a short consultation with the sheriff, it was agreed that he should remain on the bluff, and see that the robber did not escape while we were bringing up the Belle, and that I should go with Tom, and take him on board at the place where he had landed. If we both left the bluff, he might still be smart enough to escape, in spite of his injury.

I hastened down the path, and, hailing Tom, was soon on board of the Belle. I told the skipper we had damaged the robber so that he was willing to surrender, and had given up his pistol, which I exhibited. By the time we reached the point in the gully where the Raven had grounded, the robber had arrived there, and the sheriff at the point on the bluff above him. On the way, I had loaded all the barrels of the robber's revolver, and held it in my hand. But the desperado seemed to be very badly injured, and I was obliged to help him into the boat. He seated himself opposite me, and I put his travelling-bag in the cuddy.

Pushing off, Tom headed the Belle out into the lake, in order to take a tack so as to reach the foot



of the path, and receive the sheriff on board. Under the lee of the Raven, the skipper put the helm down, and I went forward to clear away the jib. While I was thus occupied, the robber made a sudden spring at Tom, and taking him up in his arms, tossed him into the lake. The deed was done in the twinkling of an eye. The robber then made a leap towards me.

CHAPTER XVII.

A BLOW WITH THE BOAT-HOOK.

THE robber appeared to be suffering so much from the injuries in his shoulder that I had not considered him capable of giving us any further trouble ; and when I went forward to clear away the jib, I put the revolver in my pocket. I did not suppose a man who declared that his shoulder was broken would make an attack upon us, and I had relinquished the precautions adopted when the desperado came on board.

I was astounded and horrified when I saw Tom pitched into the lake with so little ceremony. I saw the robber spring towards me, and I fully comprehended his purpose. He doubtless intended to throw me overboard also, and then seek some more available landing-place than he had chosen before. I had only time to pick up the boat-hook, when I divined his plan, before he was upon the half deck. I had been too ten-

der-hearted and forbearing before, but now I was desperate, when I saw poor Tom floundering in the lake, wounded, and hardly able to help himself.

Swinging the boat-hook over my head, I sprang towards the robber; and, clearing the fore-stay, I brought it down upon his bare pate with a force that felled him to the floor of the standing-room. He attempted to dodge my blow, but the boom swung round and held him so that he could not avoid it. I hit him fairly with the heavy iron at the end of my weapon, and he dropped as an ox does under the butcher's axe.

"I think you will lie still for a while now," said I, glancing at him, as I hastened to the helm.

The Belle had lost her headway when Tom was removed from the helm, and I was fortunately able to reach him with the boat-hook. I extended it to him, and he grasped it with the hand of the uninjured arm. I pulled him in, and helped him on board.

"Are you hurt, Tom?" I asked, anxiously, as soon as I had dragged the skipper into the standing-room.

"No, I guess not," he replied, shaking the water from his hair. "That fellow wouldn't have done that if I had only had two arms, instead of one. It was a shabby trick he played me."

“I think he will have a sore head after this.”

“I saw you crack him with the boat-hook.”

“I gave him a stunner.”

“Did you kill him?”

“I don’t know. He hasn’t moved since he fell.”

Gathering up the sheet, which had run out in the scrape, I headed the boat for the foot of the path, where the sheriff was waiting for us. I had heard him yell when the robber tossed Tom into the lake, and I had no doubt he was gratified with the turn I had been able to give to the affair.

“How do you feel, Tom?” I asked, when I had put the Belle on her course.

“First rate, Wolf,” he replied; but his looks and actions belied his words.

“No, you don’t, Tom. You are suffering.”

“Well, to tell the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, that villain gave my sore arm an awful twist, and it don’t feel as good as it did.”

“Let me get the sheriff on board, and then we will run for Priam, where we can have something done for you.”

“O, never mind me, Wolf. I’m so glad we have got

our man, that I don't care much for anything else," replied Tom.

"I'm afraid you will take cold, and have a bad arm, if something isn't done for it."

"I should rather laugh to see myself taking cold," added Tom. "Why, I'm in the water half the time, and I feel just as good when I'm wet through as when I'm dry."

"I don't care what you say; I intend to take good care of you, Tom," I replied, as I lowered the main-sail, and ran the boat up at the foot of the path.

"You have had a narrow escape," said the sheriff.

"Yes; but an inch is as good as a mile. We are all right now. Hurry up, Mr. Bradshaw. We are going up to Priam."

"To Priam?"

"Yes; I'm going to have Tom taken care of before I do anything more."

"But I don't want to go to Priam."

"Leave you here, then, if you like," I replied.

"But I want to take that man up to Centreport."

"On board, or I will shove off without you."

The sheriff stepped into the boat, and began to talk

about his prisoner; but I headed the Belle for Priam, in spite of his objections.

“That fellow begins to move,” said Tom.

The robber rolled over and put his hand to his head. Then he heaved a long sigh. Tom took the helm, at his own desire, and the sheriff and I raised the desperado, and laid him on one of the seats. The blood was flowing down the side of his head, and we found an ugly wound where I had hit him. The blow had stunned him; but he was beginning to revive. The sheriff washed his head, and bound a handkerchief over the wound, which I judged was not a serious one. In a short time he was able to sit up, and the officer put a pair of handcuffs upon his wrists.

“I suppose it is all up with me now,” said he, after he had surveyed the situation, and glanced particularly at the handcuffs.

“You may as well hang up your fiddle now,” added Tom. “How is your shoulder?”

“My shoulder is sore, but I think I could use it again if there was a good chance,” said he, biting his lips. “What are you going to do with me?”

“I’ll take good care of you now,” replied the sheriff.

“Don’t be rough on a fellow.”

“By gracious! I’ve seen this fellow before!” exclaimed Tom, suddenly. “It’s Schleifer, that hardware drummer, as sure as you live!”

I looked at him carefully, and was satisfied that Tom was right. But he was very much changed. His face was covered with smut and dirt. His dress, which had been carefully adjusted when we saw him before, was now deranged and soiled. He had evidently used a good deal of oil in cutting the hole through the door of the bank vault, and had daubed his face all over, so that he looked like a machinist just from the shop. As I looked at him now, I was not surprised that we had not recognized him.

“Schleifer it is, if you believe that is my name,” he replied. “Names are cheap.”

“Where is the other fellow?” asked Tom.

“I hope he has been smarter than I have,” answered the robber, gloomily.

“You have been smart,” added Tom.

“If I had not run into that infernal hole, I should not have been here.”

“Who was that man with you?” I asked, recall-

ing the scene in front of the stable at the hotel, on the preceding evening.

“Who is he? You can ask just as many questions as you please; and I can answer just as many as I like,” replied he. “But we won’t quarrel because I have been unfortunate. It’s a great pity that a young man like me should be sent to the jug for the best part of my life. Can’t we make a trade?”

“What do you mean by a trade?” asked the sheriff.

“I’ll be fair with you,” continued the robber. “I have in my bag about thirty or forty thousand dollars—I don’t know how much. We didn’t stop to count the money. Call it forty thousand. Here are four of us, and that’s just ten thousand apiece. In other words, if you will let me off, I will give you ten thousand apiece, whether I have anything myself or not.”

“That’s a pretty good offer,” said the sheriff, who had probably never seen ten thousand dollars in his life.

I did not care to discuss such a question, and therefore said nothing.

"It won't compromise you in the slightest degree," continued the robber, evidently encouraged by the remark of the officer. "Just run the boat up to the shore, and I will take care of myself. All you have to say is, that you could not catch me. You can put a shot or two through your hat, and through your coat, to prove that you have not been backward in following me up."

"Ten thousand dollars is a good deal of money to a poor man like me," added Mr. Bradshaw. "It is more money than I ever expected to see at one time."

"It will not be the first time such a trade has been made," urged the robber.

"What do you say, Wolf?" added the sheriff, turning to me.

"I don't say anything," I replied.

"Here is a good chance to make some money."

"I can tell you of a better chance."

"What's that?"

"Go up and rob the Middleport or the Ucayga Bank. If you do the job well, I have no doubt you can make fifty thousand by it."

“Of course I wouldn’t rob a bank,” he replied, laughing.

“You might as well as make a trade with this fellow. It’s all the same thing.”

“You really don’t suppose I meant to do such a thing,” said he, with a sickly smile.

“Come, what do you say?” persisted the robber, glancing anxiously ahead, for we were rapidly approaching Priam.

“We will not say anything more about it,” replied the sheriff.

And he did not. I will not say whether, if the sheriff had been alone, he would have made such a nefarious bargain as that suggested by the robber; but I considered it better that he was not alone. Schleifer pressed the subject; but Bradshaw was now indignant at the idea, and finally it was dropped. The sheriff behaved rather nervously; but I could not tell whether it was because he was losing a chance to make his fortune, or was afraid he had committed himself.

“Do you suppose they have caught the other fellow?” asked Tom, as we approached Priam.

“If they haven’t, they will catch him,” I replied.

“What makes you think so?” demanded the robber.

“I know all about him now,” I answered.

“You don’t know so much as you think you do.”

“I think I shall be able to find Lord Palsgrave,”

I added.

“Bah! You will find him as you did me — by accident, if you find him at all. If I had not run into that hole, you would not have seen me again. I was a fool that I did not cut a hole in the bottom of this boat, instead of trying to burn her.”

“We all make blunders,” I suggested.

“Yes, you have made your full share,” sneered he.

“Do you know where I was when you were looking for me on the other side? I’ll tell you. I was in that gully, listening to what you said.”

The robber was evidently trying to comfort himself in his misfortune, and he regaled us, until we reached the wharf, with a recital of the manner in which he had balked us. He wanted to know how we happened to be in the Narrows at midnight, but I did not care to enlighten him. We landed at Priam, and went up to the hotel, the sheriff

guarding his prisoner with the greatest care. The intelligence of the robbery of the bank had already reached the town, for Captain Synders and Waddie had passed through the place several hours before in pursuit of the other robber.

I sent for a doctor as soon as we reached the hotel, and obtained a supply of dry clothing for Tom. In a short time I had made him very comfortable. The physician dressed his wound, and declared that it was not serious, though it would give the patient some trouble.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AT THE CATARACT HOUSE.

IT was decided that the sheriff should return to Centreport with his prisoner in the Ucayga, which left Hitaca at one o'clock, and would be at Priam before two. The doctor insisted that Tom should keep quiet for two or three days, and he reluctantly consented to return in the steamer, while I went up the lake to the Cataract House, to see what had become of Lord Palsgrave.

Soon after we arrived at the hotel, Schleifer declared that he was nearly starved, for he had not eaten anything since he had taken his supper the evening before in Hitaca. I ordered an early dinner for the whole party, and the robber's handcuffs were removed to enable him to use his knife and fork; but both the sheriff and myself had a revolver by the side of our plates, and the rascal made no attempt to escape.

While we were at dinner, Captain Synders and Waddie arrived, on their return from the pursuit of the other robber. They had not been able to obtain the slightest clew to him in this direction, and had come to the conclusion that he had gone towards Ucayga; but a party had been sent in that direction, and it was hoped he had been captured.

“How far did you go, Waddie?” I asked.

“We went about a mile beyond the Cataract House,” he replied. “We could not find the slightest trace of him.”

“Did you stop at the Cataract House?”

“Yes, a few minutes.”

“Did you see Mr. Overton?”

“No; but the landlord told me he was out looking for Miss Dornwood, who disappeared last evening very strangely,” replied Waddie, chuckling. “Lord—What’s his name?”

“Lord Palsgrave,” I added, with interest.

“Lord Palsgrave was helping him in the search.”

“Indeed!” I exclaimed. “All right!”

“What’s all right?”

“Lord Palsgrave.”

"What of him?"

"He's your man."

"What do you mean?" demanded Waddie, unable to comprehend my rapid suggestions.

"You have not seen the robber we captured, Waddie. I had forgotten that. You must go in and look at him."

"Why?"

"He is an old acquaintance of ours."

"The robber?"

"Yes; in a word, it is the hardware drummer that we took from the burning canal-boat," I replied. "His mission in Centreport was to rob the bank."

"Now I remember the fellow said he wanted to go to Centreport, half a dozen times, and as often corrected himself, and made it Middleport. You don't say that drummer is the fellow!"

"It's a fact; and, if the drummer was one of them, it follows that Lord Palsgrave is the other."

"By the great horn spoon!" ejaculated Waddie.

"It's as clear as mud," I added. "I saw his lordship and the drummer leave the stable together in a vehicle."

“But how could he get back here? That’s what bothers me. We came down by the direct road, and could not get any traces of him.”

“I don’t know how that is, but I am satisfied his lordship is one of the men who robbed the Centreport Bank. I am going to the Cataract House in the Belle. Captain Synders had better go with me, for I am sure Lord Palsgrave is our man.”

“All right; and I will go also,” replied Waddie.

We went into the hotel, and my friend was fully convinced of the correctness of my theory when he saw and recognized the drummer. Schleifer, or whatever his name was, continued to be boastful and defiant. He was a hard villain, and seemed to take great pleasure in informing us how he had cheated us in the pursuit. When we went in, he was telling the sheriff that, though he had been hit on the shoulder by a stone, he was not much hurt, and had concluded that his chances were better in the boat than in that dismal hole. We did not pay much attention to him, however; and, after Waddie and Captain Synders had dined, we embarked in the Belle for the Cataract House.

"I don't understand how the other robber can be down here," said the constable when we were under way. "In fact, I don't believe he is here."

"You shall be satisfied on that point before night," I replied.

"It would be a feather in our caps if we should happen to catch him," added the captain.

"If he don't get frightened and clear out, we shall have him before night," I replied.

Indeed, I wondered that his lordship had the temerity to remain in the vicinity after the crime in which he had been engaged, and I suggested to my companions that we should proceed with the utmost caution, and capture him before the news of Schleifer's mishap reached him. The wind was still fair and fresh, and we made a quick run to our destination. We landed at a point some distance above that from which we had started the night before, and, taking a path through the woods, proceeded to the stable in the rear of the hotel. I wished to ascertain when and how his lordship had returned. I did not like to have the constable exhibit himself, and I left him in the grove, though

he grumbled not a little at being compelled to play an inferior part in the transaction. I found the stable-keeper, who knew me very well, and being in a position to send customers to the hotel, I was treated with much consideration.

“You remember that I was here last evening?” I began, after he had greeted me.

“Yes, you were asking about that lord who is stopping in the house.”

“Exactly so. I never happened to meet a live lord, and I am rather anxious to see one. Has he returned yet?”

“Yes; he came back this morning, about eight o'clock.”

“Did the other gentleman return with him?” I asked.

“No; did you know him?”

“I had seen him before. Do you know where they went?”

“Over to Highlandville. Lord Palsgrave said he had been over there to see a friend he met in England last year.”

His lordship was certainly very obliging to state

his business so definitely to the stable-keeper; and I was rather desirous of knowing who his friends in Highlandville were. This place was about five miles back from the lake.

“Do you know where he is now?” I continued.

“He and another gentleman took a team this forenoon, and went away. They have not returned yet.”

“Who was the other gentleman?”

“Mr. Overton, I think; at any rate, it was the one who came with him,” replied the stable-keeper. “I reckon there is some trouble in the family, Captain Penniman. The young lady who came with the party cleared out last night, and they have been looking for her all day. I believe they have gone to Hitaca this time.”

The stable-keeper wanted to tell me all about the young lady, who had “cleared out;” but as I knew more of the matter than he did, I was not anxious to hear the story. The only point in his narrative that interested me was the statement that the young lady was supposed to be insane, being subject to this malady. I concluded that this

was an invention of Mr. Overton, put forth for the purpose of concealing the real trouble.

“There they are now!” said the stable-keeper, as a team drove up to the side door of the hotel. “I thought they would be back by dinner time.”

One of the gentlemen alighted from the vehicle, and went into the hotel, while the other drove the horse up to the stable. The latter was Mr. Overton, and as I did not care about being seen before we were ready to put the bracelets on the wrists of his lordship, I left the stable, and moved towards the grove where I had left my companions. But the horse, when headed towards the stable, smelt his oats, and started off rather suddenly, and Mr. Overton drove him around the hotel to prevent the animal from turning too short a corner. I did not observe where he went, and as I was hastening to the grove, I met him in the road, where I could not avoid him without jumping over the fence, which my dignity would not permit me to do. He recognized me at once, and stopped the horse.

“I wish to see you, young man,” said he, in an arrogant tone, as he stepped out of the vehicle.

One of the hostlers came to the place, and took charge of the horse, so that he was relieved of all care on his account, and able to give his whole attention to me. I nodded to him, as he spoke, to indicate that I was ready to hear him.

"You are one of the persons who were with my ward, Miss Dornwood, yesterday afternoon?" he continued, pulling off his glove.

"I am one of the persons," I replied.

"You are the owner of a boat?"

"No, sir, I am not."

"One of your party is?"

"One of my party is."

"Where is that boat now?" demanded he, beginning to be a little excited.

"She lies over by the shore yonder."

"Where?" repeated he, sternly.

"If you wish to see her, I will take you to her," I replied, good-naturedly, for this is my policy when other people are angry.

"I don't wish to see her; I only want to know where she is."

"Well, sir, she is not a half a mile from here."

"Hasn't she been away somewhere?"

"I believe the lake is free for her to go wherever her skipper chooses to take her," I replied, prudently.

It occurred to me that Lord Palsgrave might be interested to know where the Belle had been, and I was afraid some information might be conveyed to him before I was ready to have him receive it.

"You don't answer my question," said Mr. Overton, savagely.

"I don't consider myself under any obligation to answer your questions, especially when you propose them in this offensive manner," I replied, mildly.

He bit his lips, and perhaps he recognized the force of my remark.

"I have a purpose in putting these questions," he added, more gently.

"I can't help it if you have, sir."

"In a word, the young lady whom you assisted has run away. Do you know anything about her?"

"For the present, sir, I decline to answer."

"Which means that you do know something about her."

"You may draw your own conclusions."

"Let me tell you, young man, that Miss Dornwood is my ward, and under my authority. Lord Palsgrave and myself have been searching for her all the forenoon."

"Indeed! Is Lord Palsgrave much interested in her?" I asked.

"He is to be her husband, and of course he is very anxious in regard to her."

"If he is to be her husband, I should think he might be anxious," I added, coolly.

"He is very much distressed, and if you know anything about her, you will do him a very great favor by informing him where she is."

"I should be happy to oblige his lordship."

"Lord Palsgrave is compelled to start for New York this afternoon, upon important business, and he is very anxious to know what has become of Miss Dornwood before he leaves."

"I should think he would be. Then he is going away on important business," I repeated, glad to know the fact. "Will you introduce me to his lordship?"

"I will."

"I will tell him where the lady is."

"Very well; you shall see him, at once."

"I will meet you at the hotel in a few moments,"

I replied, moving towards the place where I had left Waddie and Captain Synders.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE OTHER BANK ROBBER.

I CALLED Captain Synders and Waddie from their hiding-place, and hastened to the hotel, intending to reach it about as soon as Mr. Overton, for I was rather fearful that his lordship would take the alarm, and leave before I had an opportunity to introduce him to the constable.

“I promised to tell Lord Palsgrave where Miss Dornwood is,” said I, as we hurried towards the rear entrance of the hotel, while Mr. Overton had gone to the front door. “Have you any objection, Waddie?”

“I don’t know that I have. It is useless to try to hide her from him,” he replied, as we entered the hotel.

I saw Mr. Overton go into the parlor; and, after placing the constable where he would be available when his services were needed, Waddie and I followed the anxious guardian. We found him talking to an elegantly dressed lady, who, I concluded, was his wife.

“Lord Palsgrave is not here just now,” said Mr. Overton, as we approached the spot where he stood.

“He has gone up stairs to dress for dinner,” added the lady. “He said he would be down in a few moments.”

“We are somewhat in a hurry,” I continued, anxiously; for I was afraid his lordship might obtain a hint of the presence of a constable on the premises.

“If you are in a hurry, it will be quite as proper for you to impart your information to me,” said Mr. Overton.

“I promised to give it to Lord Palsgrave only,” I added, wishing him to understand that I would give it to no other person.

I was very much afraid of making a blunder. Of course his lordship, having just returned from robbing a bank, would naturally be very excitable and suspicious. I walked across the room with Waddie, in order to obtain an opportunity to speak with him in private.

“Go to the office, Waddie, and ascertain the number of Lord Palsgrave’s room, and don’t let him leave the house,” I said to him, in a low tone. “Don’t say anything unless he attempts to leave.”

"I understand," replied Waddie, as he left the parlor to execute his mission.

"I hope you will not leave till you have seen Lord Palsgrave," said Mr. Overton, perhaps afraid that I should follow the example of my companion.

"I will not, sir," I answered, walking with him over to the place where the lady was seated.

"We are very anxious indeed about Miss Dornwood," he added; "but more for her own sake than for any other reason. She is young and giddy."

"I think you need not be disturbed about her."

"How can we help being worried about her?" said the lady.

"Well, madam, I can assure you she is with excellent people, who will be very careful of her."

"Did I understand you to say that you conveyed Miss Dornwood away in your boat?" asked Mr. Overton.

"Whatever the facts may be, I did not say so. Did I understand you to say that Miss Dornwood is engaged to Lord Palsgrave?"

"I did say so."

"I suppose you have been acquainted with his lordship for a long time, then?"

“No, only a few weeks.”

“Of course you are satisfied that he is what he represents himself to be.”

“What, Lord Palsgrave?” demanded Mr. Overton, with a frown. “Why do you ask such a question?”

“I suppose you are aware, sir, that all people who pass themselves off as noblemen in the United States are not really so.”

“I think such a suggestion is an insult to his lordship. Did Miss Dornwood intimate to you that Lord Palsgrave was an impostor?”

“She did not. On the contrary, I am confident that she believes he is just what he claims to be.”

“There can be no doubt about that. May I ask if you know anything about Lord Palsgrave?”

“I do know something about him, though I have not yet even met his lordship.”

“I think you ask rather remarkable questions concerning him. But here comes his lordship,” added he, as an elegantly-dressed young gentleman entered the parlor.

Mr. Overton hastened to meet Lord Palsgrave, and spoke to him for a moment in private. While they

were thus engaged, Waddie entered the room, and came to my side. We had an opportunity to examine his lordship's elegantly-fitting garments, which were certainly very creditable to his tailor. I had obtained a single glance at his face, and if his voice had been familiar to me, there was also something in his looks which seemed to remind me that I had seen him before, though I did not then recognize him.

Lord Palsgrave was in full dress, with a white vest and black dress coat. His patent-leather boots were unexceptionable, and his pants were a capital fit. From his neck an eye-glass dangled at the end of a silken cord. He wore a light mustache, which had evidently been colored within a recent period, and every hair on his head was adjusted with the nicest care. If I had met him in the street I should have called him a dandy without any compunction of conscience. I wish to say that I have since seen a live duke and a live earl; but both of them, though they looked and acted like gentlemen, were very plainly dressed.

"He's a swellish-looking fellow — isn't he?" said Waddie, as he joined me in the parlor.

"The chief end of man with him is to keep up appearances," I replied.

"I think I have seen that fellow before."

"So do I, but I can't make him out."

"Did you get a good view of him, Wolf?"

"I only obtained a single glance at his face when he came in; but I pity Miss Dornwood if she is compelled to throw herself away upon such a puppy as he."

"That match will be broken up, I think."

"Did you see him up stairs, Waddie?"

"No. I knocked at his door, and satisfied myself he was in his room; but I cleared out as soon as he answered me. I did not let him see me when he came out."

"Where is Captain Synders now?" I asked.

"I told him to stand by the door when I came in, and he is all ready to pounce upon his victim."

"Here comes Mr. Overton," I added, as his lordship turned and walked over to the place where Mrs. Overton was seated.

"Excuse me, but I have not your name," said Mr. Overton.

"Captain Penniman," I replied.



W. B. W. SC.

I walked with him into the immediate presence of his august lordship.

“Lord Palsgrave, Captain Penniman,” said Mr. Overton.

His lordship had adjusted his eye-glass as he raised his head from the lady.

“Captain Penniman!” exclaimed he; and his face turned as red as a blood beet.

“Nick Van Wolter!” I almost shouted, as I recognized the distinguished nobleman. “I hope your lordship is quite well.”

“By the great horn spoon! It is Nick Van Wolter!” cried Waddie.

“Do you know these persons, Mr. Overton?” said his lordship, recovering his self-possession, and adjusting his eye-glass with particular care.

“I do not.”

“Don’t you know me, Lord Nick Van Wolter?” I asked, laughing heartily at the airs of his lordship.

“Certainly not,” he answered.

“Then I have the advantage of your lordship.”

“So have I,” added Waddie; “and that’s two against one.”

“Who are these persons?” demanded his lordship, still squinting at us through his eye-glass.

“I don’t know them; but one of them informs me that he knows where Miss Dornwood is, and is willing to inform your lordship,” replied Mr. Overton.

“I am that person, and I shall be happy to give his lordship all the information in my power,” I answered.

“What do you know of the lady?” asked his lordship, in supercilious tones.

“She went down the lake in the Belle last night — his lordship knows the Belle very well.”

“The belle — pray, sir, do you refer to Miss Dornwood?” said Lord Palsgrave, squinting at me through the glass.

“I do not. I refer to the sloop boat Belle, in which your lordship has sailed more than once.”

“What do you mean by that, fellow?”

“Come, Nick, this farce is played out.”

“Nick! What do you mean, fellow, by applying such an insulting epithet to me?” exclaimed his lordship.

“I hope you will treat Lord Palsgrave with proper respect,” interposed Mr. Overton.

“Well, sir, I happen to know that Lord Palsgrave and Nick Van Wolter, the son of the present captain of the steamer Ucayga, are one and the same person. In other words, Mr Overton, he is a humbug.”

“Fellow!” ejaculated his lordship. “How dare you insult me?”

“O, I dare, if you call the simple truth an insult,” I replied.

“I will not endure this insolence,” said his lordship, rushing towards the door.

“Yes, you will,” I interposed, placing myself before him.

“I will call the landlord, and have you ejected from the premises.”

“Not yet. I will send for the landlord, and save you that trouble. Waddie, will you call him?” and I nodded to him to indicate that Captain Synders might also be introduced.

By this time there was a great excitement in the parlor. The guests of the house who were waiting for dinner had become interested in the affair. Nick Van Wolter, while he still attempted to maintain his assumed character, was evidently very much discon-

certed, and was thinking how he should get out of the room, and make his escape. When Captain Synders entered the parlor, his jaw fell.

“Nick Van Wolter, as true as you live,” said the constable, as he came in, Waddie having previously informed him who the victim was.

“Captain Penniman, you promised to tell his lordship where Miss Dornwood is,” interposed Mr. Overton.

“I am entirely willing to do so,” I replied. “But I am surprised to find that his lordship does not remember the Belle. Why, when his lordship and the other gentleman — who, I believe, does not pretend to be a lord — were crossing the lake last night, after midnight, the Belle actually ran into his boat. I will add that Miss Dornwood was on board of the Belle at the time, though she was asleep in the cabin.”

“His lordship in a boat?” repeated Mr. Overton.

“Exactly so; and if his lordship will pardon the freedom of my speech, he and the other gentleman — who is not a lord — robbed the Centreport Bank of fifty or sixty thousand dollars.”

“Robbed a bank!” exclaimed Mr. Overton.

Lord Palsgrave's face was deadly pale, and his frame quivered with emotion.

"His lordship is well acquainted with Captain Synders, constable of Centreport, who is here for the purpose of arresting him."

"O, yes! I know his lordship like a book," replied the constable. "I have known him for a good many years, and I'm sorry to say, I never knew much good of him."

At this moment the gong for dinner sounded; but none of the guests in the parlor manifested any disposition to regard the summons.

"I have heard enough of this nonsense. Mrs. Overton, allow me to escort you to the table," said his lordship, trying to stiffen his joints again, as he stepped up to the lady, and extended his arm to her.

"I hope Mrs. Overton will excuse your lordship, for we have not finished our business yet," I remarked, as the constable stepped up to his victim.

His lordship was evidently very much disgusted and disheartened.

CHAPTER XX.

THE END OF LORD PALSgrave.

“**L**ANDLORD, I have been outrageously insulted in your house, and if you do not instantly expel these insolent persons, I shall be obliged to leave myself,” said Lord Palsgrave, approaching the landlord, who had just arrived at the scene of the excitement.

“Not just yet, I guess,” replied Captain Synders, who did not permit his victim to get out of the reach of his arm.

“I know nothing about this business,” replied mine host. “Captain Synders is a constable, and I presume he knows what he is about.”

“I do know just what I’m about,” added the constable.

“I think it is quite proper for the officer to show his warrant,” added the landlord.

“I haven’t any warrant; but we don’t let a bank robber escape for the want of one.”

“At least you ought to show some ground for arresting this gentleman.”

“I’m going to search him, and if I don’t find twenty or thirty thousand dollars in bills of the Centreport Bank upon him, I shall be willing to wait till I get a warrant, before I take him.”

“Search me! Do you think I will submit to such an unheard-of indignity?” demanded his lordship, stamping his foot with rage, which, however, was manufactured for the occasion.

“I guess you will, Nick,” quietly replied the constable.

“Don’t call me Nick, fellow,” foamed the victim.

“Captain Penniman, before you proceed to extreme measures in my house, I hope you will give me some assurance that there is no mistake about the person,” interposed the landlord.

“I demand it as my right,” added Lord Palsgrave. “I will appeal to the British minister at Washington, who is a particular friend of my father.”

“I shall be very happy to satisfy you, and all present, that there is no mistake in regard to the person,” I replied. “A man who called himself Schleifer —

though that is probably not his real name — was taken out of a burning canal-boat on the lake, last evening, by our party. That man was one of the bank robbers.”

“I never saw or heard of such a man,” protested Lord Palsgrave, violently.

“I beg his lordship’s pardon, but he rode away from the stable of this hotel with that man. The stable-keeper assured me the person who went with him was Lord Palsgrave. I am sure they went off together. The other man has been arrested.”

I saw that his lordship was startled by this information.

“Did you recognize Lord Palsgrave in the vehicle with the other man?” asked the landlord.

“I did not, for I could not see his face,” I replied. “But I did recognize the man who has been arrested, and the stable-keeper said the other one was his lordship.”

“As you did not identify Lord Palsgrave yourself, there may still be some mistake.”

“There is a mistake,” said his lordship, warmly.

“Further, this person is not Lord Palsgrave, but

Nick Van Wolter, the son of Captain Van Wolter of the Ucayga. Here are three of us who have known him for years."

"If that's the case, I have nothing to say," added the landlord. .

"Come, Nick, let's see what you have in your pockets," said Captain Synders.

"Landlord, will you suffer this indignity to be inflicted upon me in your house?" appealed Nick.

"I haven't anything more to say about it. Dinner is ready, ladies and gentlemen," he replied.

But no one was disposed to dine while the issue was pending.

"Mr. Overton, I assure you this is an outrage," protested Nick.

"If you are not what you represented yourself to be, I have no sympathy with you," replied the gentleman addressed, who evidently thought it necessary to free himself from any suspicion of complicity with the bank robber.

Nick glanced around the room with all the dignity he could summon to his aid, and then made a leap towards one of the open windows. The vigi-

lant constable was too quick for him, and placed a heavy hand upon him.

“Don’t be in a hurry, Nick,” said the officer, taking from his pocket a pair of handcuffs.

“What have you there?” demanded Nick.

“Only a pair of irons!”

“Irons! Has it come to this? They will pierce my soul!” exclaimed his lordship, who had evidently borrowed this fine expression, as he had his knowledge of heraldry, from the novels he had read.

“They won’t touch your soul, Nick; I’m only going to put them on your wrists, so that you will hold still, and not jerk about so,” added the constable, as, with some force, he snapped the irons upon his prisoner. “Now, we want to know what you have in your pockets, Nick. It’s no use to jerk; you can’t get away.”

Captain Synders searched his pockets, but did not find anything to implicate him in the robbery; but he took possession of a bunch of keys, which he handed to me, and requested me to examine the prisoner’s effects in his room. The landlord went with us, and we opened his trunk.

"These are the clothes he had on last night," said I, taking from the trunk a tweed suit. "You see they are very much soiled with smut and oil."

"Do you find any tools?" asked the landlord.

"No; I think the other robber provided them," I replied, as I pulled all the clothing out of the trunk.

In the bottom of it I found a packet done up in brown paper. It was about the length and width of a bank note, and I was sure it contained money. I opened it.

"There's no mistake about that," said the landlord, as I came to the bills. "Centreport Bank," he added, looking at the face of the notes.

"I was sure of my man. See here," I replied, pointing to the address of the cashier on the brown paper, which had probably enclosed some article sent to Mr. Barnes at the bank.

"That's a pile of money," added the landlord, as I turned over the notes.

"I judge, from what the other robber said, that there must be twenty or thirty thousand dollars."

We returned to the parlor, and exhibited the re-

sult of the search. There was no longer any doubt as to the guilt of his lordship, and the guests went to their dinner, congratulating themselves, perhaps, that, after all, Lord Palsgrave was not "the biggest toad in the puddle." Mr. Overton, however, did not go with them, but paced the room in high excitement. It was easy to understand that the situation was very far from being agreeable to him.

"Well, I suppose we may as well be getting back to Centreport as fast as possible," said Captain Synders, who was probably in a hurry to march his prisoner in triumph into the town.

"His lordship has not dined yet," suggested Waddie.

"I don't want any dinner," said Nick, bursting into tears, as the extent of his reverses crowded upon his mind.

Half an hour before, every one treated him with profound respect and great consideration; now every one despised him, and looked down upon him with contempt. His tears were moving, and, as he had laid aside his lordly airs, we were not disposed to ridicule him. If he had been sincerely repentant over his crime, instead of being sorry for its mere

exposure, we could have pitied and sympathized with him.

“Take me away from here as quick as you can,” added Nick. “I hope you will let me go to my room and change my clothes.”

“That suit is good enough,” replied the constable.

“I would rather not go to Centreport in this dress.”

Waddie and I interfered in his favor, for we were not disposed to increase his suffering, and the constable consented to take him to his room to clothe himself in a more becoming suit.

“Captain Penniman, you have not told me yet where Miss Dornwood is,” said Mr Overton.

“I did not agree to tell you, but only your friend,” I replied.

“He is not my friend now. He is an impostor,” added Mr. Overton, warmly.

Nick glanced at him as he uttered these words, and appeared to regard the epithet as very unkind from him.

“Tell him, Wolf,” said Waddie.

“Miss Dornwood is at Mr. Pinkerton’s, in Ruoara,” I added.

The guardian bit his lip, and seemed to be very much disconcerted. His plans for the fortune, as well as those of Nick, were doubtless very much deranged. He said no more, and Captain Synders conducted his prisoner to his room. As the injury which Tom Walton had received rendered it doubtful whether we should return to complete my vacation in this part of the lake, I concluded that I would take my bear home in the Belle. I promised to meet the rest of our party at the boat in a short time, and hastened over to Captain Portman's. I found him at home; and, as we walked out to the quarters of Bruin, he told me he had another bear on his hands.

“Another!” I exclaimed.

“Yes, the twin brother of mine,” replied Captain Portman. “Major Tompkins, a friend of mine in Hitaca, brought them down from the woods, where an old hunter had reared them as pets. They amused him so much that he bought them to keep in his garden; but the illness of his wife compelled him to go to Europe, and as he expected to be absent two or three years, he gave one to my neighbor, Mr. Walker, and the other to me. Mine has never been cross, though

they say the other one has been a little ugly; but I found they had almost choked him by buckling the strap too tight around his neck. He has been as pleasant as a kitten since he has been here. Now, Wolf, if you want both of them, you shall have them."

I did not want both of them, and I was rather embarrassed by the offer; but when we reached the quarters of the two bears, I changed my mind. I saw them play together, and I laughed till my sides ached at their gambols. It was a pity to part two such excellent friends, and I decided to accept Captain Portman's offer. I stepped up to the one whose acquaintance I had made before. He appeared to recognize me, stood up, and presented his paw. The other had been trained in like manner, and performed the same trick. I shook hands with them, and found they were both ready for a frolic, in which, however, I had not time to engage.

I told the two men whom Captain Portman called where the Belle lay, and they led the bears down to the lake, while their employer walked with me. I related to him the particulars of the bank robbery and the capture of the robbers. He was very much

astonished to learn that the lord at the hotel was one of the criminals.

When we reached the lake, I found Captain Synders and Waddie with the prisoner, who was still in irons. The constable was very impatient, and when he saw the two bears, which were to be his fellow-passengers, he declared he would not go in the boat with them. Indeed, I found myself that two bears were rather too many for the space the Belle afforded; but Captain Portman relieved me of the difficulty by promising to send one of his men to Middleport with them in the steamer the next day.

Captain Synders embarked his prisoner, and we were soon driving down the lake. Nick Van Wolter was the image of despair. His brilliant calculations for the future had utterly failed, and instead of marrying an heiress, he was to spend a long time in the penitentiary. I have no doubt he was willing to believe that "the way of the transgressor is hard."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE ADVENTURES OF NICK VAN WOLTER.

“WOLF, you have been a thorn in my path,” said Nick Van Wolter, as the Belle stood down the lake.

“Do you regard me as the author of your misfortunes?” I inquired.

“Certainly I do.”

“You are mistaken. You are the author of them yourself, Nick.”

“I don’t think so. Everything was going very well with me till you came up here,” he added, bitterly.

“I did not instigate you to rob the bank.”

“No; but I should have got off if you had not turned up.”

“You don’t seem to think that your crimes are the cause of your misfortunes, Nick. If you had been an honest and upright young man, I could not possibly have done you any harm.”

“That may be true, but you have upset all my calculations.”

“You should not have had any such calculation as the robbing of a bank.”

“Well, I suppose it will not make any difference now. This is the end of me,” he replied, as the tears filled his eyes again. “Ten or twenty years in prison is not a pleasant thing to think of.”

“You ought to have thought of that before you robbed the bank.”

“Of course I had, but I didn’t. I hadn’t the least idea that I should be detected. I didn’t think it was possible; and it wouldn’t have been, if you had kept out of the way.”

“You were blind, Nick. Murder will out. Those who commit great crimes are almost always discovered. I don’t believe a man who commits a crime has more than one chance in a hundred of escaping the consequence of it, even in this world,” I added, warmly.

“Do you think any one would have suspected me of robbing the bank if you had been out of the way, Wolf?”

“I think it would have come out. There is always

a screw loose somewhere in this kind of business. You did not know I was near the hotel till Mr. Overton introduced me."

"Yes, I did; I saw you yesterday afternoon, when you landed at the grove. I saw Waddie coming towards the place when Miss Dornwood and myself were walking. I was afraid he would see me, and I told the lady I would get a team and drive her along the shore road, if she would wait where she was."

"We saw you hastening towards the hotel," said Waddie.

"I heard Miss Dornwood scream, and saw the bear before her, but I could not return because you were there. I stepped back into the grove, and saw all that passed."

"And you expected to marry Miss Dornwood?" I asked.

"Yes, I expected to do so, though she refused me once. Mr. Overton assured me he could make it all right, and I had no doubt he would. The girl was pretty and interesting."

"Did Mr. Overton know you were not what you represented yourself to be?" I inquired, finding that Nick was disposed to be communicative.

“Of course I never told him who I really was; but, after the talk we had together at Cape May, I think he understood the matter well enough. It was very fine for him to call me an impostor, after we had understood each other for a month,” replied Nick, sourly; and he seemed to be as much disgusted with Mr. Overton as with me.

“You had an understanding with him, then?”

“It was not in black and white; but I knew what he meant, and he knew what I meant.”

“What did he mean?” I asked.

Nick hesitated, and looked in the bottom of the boat, as if considering whether he should answer the question or not.

“I think Mr. Overton has used me in a shabby manner,” said he, at last. “He did not even offer to help me out of my trouble, but called me an impostor. I don’t know that I am under any obligation to conceal his tricks.”

“If he means any wrong towards Miss Dornwood, you ought not to conceal it,” added Waddie.

“She is a good girl, and I liked her. I don’t wish her any harm; and that is what Mr. Overton means. He intends to rob her of her fortune.”

“Are you sure of that, Nick?”

“I am. I’ll tell you the whole story, Wolf; and if you have a chance to do me a favor, I hope you will do it.”

“I shall be glad to do anything that is right for you,” I replied.

“I don’t want to be paraded through the streets of Centreport, and stared at by all the folks I used to know,” said Nick, glancing at the constable, as though he knew him well enough to understand that he would make the most of his victim.

The prisoner evidently expected me to save him from this painful exhibition, and I was willing to do so if it was in my power.

“I don’t owe Mr. Overton anything, certainly,” continued Nick. “I could have choked him when he introduced you to me, Wolf.”

“Didn’t he speak to you beforehand about me?” I asked.

“Not a word. Do you think I should have showed myself to you? Not at all. If I had known you were in the honse, or anywhere near it, I should have taken myself off. When I came back in the morning,

Mr. Overton told me your boat was gone, and he could not find any of the party who belonged to her. This made me perfectly easy. I was going to New York this afternoon, and I had no more idea of seeing you than I had of meeting the Queen of England."

"By the way, Nick, how did you get back to the hotel?" inquired Waddie, who had been much mystified on this subject. "We sent two men by the upper road, and Captain Synders and myself came by the shore road."

"When I met Cutter last night —"

"Who?"

"Cutter — the man who went down to Centreport with me."

"Schleifer," I added.

"He has as many names as a Spanish Infante," said Nick. "When I met him, we changed our plans. He was to go to Middleport as quietly as he could, and took a canal-boat, so as not to let many people see him. You know how he happened to come ashore here. I was to meet him on the wharf at Middleport, as soon as everything was still, and I intended to drive down after dark, so that no one could see me. After Miss

Dornwood came back to the hotel, and Mr. Overton had locked her into her room, I went down to the bar to get a glass of wine, for I was alarmed, and wanted something to raise my spirits. I met Cutter there, and he decided to ride with me to Middleport.

“I took a team, and told the stable-keeper I should not be back till late, if I returned before morning. I drove to Highlandville, where we put the team up at one stable, and hired a horse and buggy at another. At Middleport, where we arrived at half past eleven, I put the team in the shed at the store near the head of the wharf. I knew just where to find a boat, and we started to cross the lake. In the darkness I made out a sail-boat, going through the Narrows. She was close aboard of us when I discovered her. Then the sail-boat kept away a little, and ran into us.”

“Did you know what boat it was?” asked Waddie.

“I did not. I knew the Belle was up the lake, and it did not occur to me that it was she, even when the fireworks blazed up. We ought to have given up the job then, but Cutter said it was all right. We got out of the way as quick as possible. We walked over to the Institute, and soon saw the sail-boat go down the

lake. We were satisfied then, and went to the bank. We approached the building by the back way, and did the job. It took so long to cut the hole through the door, that we did not finish till nearly daylight; and even then we heard the porter in the building.

“In a few minutes there was a commotion, and we realized that our work had been discovered. I led the way to the steam-mill by the back alleys, hoping to find a boat there. We were disappointed, and as there was no one in the way, we hastened to the steamboat wharf. I jumped into the tender of the Grace; but Cutter said he would not leave the Raven, which lay there, for some one to use in following us. We decided to separate then, in order to divide and bother our pursuers. I pulled across the lake, and got my horse at the shed. I took the upper road; but the horse was not fast, and I soon heard the rattle of a wagon behind me. Seeing a road into the woods, I drove in, taking care to remove the tracks of the wheels and the horse, so that they might not attract the attention of my pursuers. I suppose they had not heard the rattle of my vehicle, for presently they passed my hiding-place at a furious speed.

“Resuming the road, I continued on my way, and reached Highlandville without seeing any person. Returning the horse I had hired here, I obtained the one I had driven from the hotel, and went leisurely back without seeing any of the pursuers. I believed I was all right then; and I should have been, if Wolf had not crossed my path.”

“Did you divide the money?” asked the constable.

“No; we each took what we happened to have. Cutter carried the gold in his bag. We were to meet in New York, and make a fair division, expecting the newspapers to tell us how much the bank had lost, so that neither could cheat the other.”

“Where have you been since we parted above Hitaca, Nick?” I inquired, in order to bring him back to the Overton business.

“I went to Philadelphia first. I meant to go into some kind of business, and save the money I had; but, while I was at a hotel in the city, I met Cutter, who persuaded me to visit a gambling saloon, where I lost about half of my money. I found that Cutter was employed by the establishment to visit the hotel, and bring in customers. I had wit enough to stop playing

when I found it was a losing game. Cutter took a fancy to me, and put me in the way of making a little money at this gambling house. I was employed as 'a young gentleman from the country.' When any one came in, I was allowed to win largely, for the encouragement of other young men from the rural districts, but of course my winnings went back to the banker.

"As the season advanced, a gambling house was opened at Cape May, and Cutter and myself went down to influence customers. I did not like the business, and he was dissatisfied with his salary. He informed me that he had been a machinist, and through many stages the conversation went on till he told me he meant to make a grand strike by emptying the vault of some bank. He talked to me about the plan for weeks before I would consent to have anything to do with it. Then I suggested the Centreport Bank. All this time we boarded at the best hotel, and no one except an occasional victim knew who or what we were. We bathed in the surf, danced, dined, and flourished in the drawing-rooms.

"There was a rumor about the hotel that an

English lord, *incog.*, was staying there. Every one wanted to penetrate the mystery; but, if there was any lord there, he kept his own secret. As a joke, Cutter whispered confidentially to some of the guests that I was the lord. I soon found that I was treated with great consideration, though, as my friend had not told me what he was about, I did not understand the reason. Fathers and mothers introduced me to their daughters, and I was a lion in spite of myself. Among those to whom Cutter had imparted the great secret was Mr. Overton, and I made the acquaintance of Miss Dornwood. Will you give me a drink of water, Wolf? I feel quite faint," said Nick, who was really very pale.

I brought him some water, and also some crackers and cheese, for I knew he had not been to dinner; but he would not eat.

CHAPTER XXII.

COLONEL WIMPLETON'S WRATH.

NICK soon declared that he felt better, and continued his story.

“I was very much pleased with Miss Dornwood, especially when I learned that she had a fortune of two hundred thousand dollars. A few days after I was introduced to her, I had the pleasure of saving her from drowning while she was bathing in the surf. She was not as grateful to me as I supposed she would be, but I hoped soon to win her regard. One day Mr. Overton came into the gambling saloon where I was employed. I was engaged in inducing a man from the country to play, and I did not notice the presence of the guardian of Miss Dornwood for some time. He knew enough of the world to understand my position. If I had seen him sooner, I should not have committed myself.

But Mr. Overton did not seem to have any less regard for me, when he met me about the hotel, and encouraged my advances to Miss Dornwood.

“I told Cutter what I was doing in this direction. He laughed, and informed me of the practical joke he had played upon me. He advised me to follow up the affair, and not to take the trouble to deny that I was an English nobleman. I was pleased with the attentions bestowed upon me by the guests, and was not disposed to ruin myself in their estimation. I continued to be very devoted to Miss Dornwood; and, as her guardian and his wife would not permit her to make other acquaintances, watching her every moment of the time, I was almost her only companion. I gave up my place in the gambling saloon, lest it should compromise me, and I had plenty of time to give to Miss Dornwood. She seemed to like me very well, and I soon proposed to her; but, to my chagrin and astonishment, she gave me a decided refusal.

“I did not believe she meant it, and I was confident that I could change her mind in due time. After this she tried to avoid me; but I managed

very carefully, devoting myself quite as much to the guardian as to the ward. Miss Dornwood certainly treated me very kindly, though she was rather shy. Mr. Overton thought she was making too many friends at Cape May, and decided to spend a few weeks at Newport. The family went there, and Cutter and myself went also. On the journey I thought Miss Dornwood had relented towards me, and soon after our arrival I had a talk with Mr. Overton, in which I boldly pleaded for the hand of his ward. He had no objections, and told me that, according to the terms of Mr. Dornwood's will, his ward could not marry unless with the guardian's consent, without losing three fourths of her fortune.

“The conversation was a long one, for Mr. Overton was very guarded in his remarks; but I understood him perfectly, even while he did not fully commit himself. He said that, as usual, some very extravagant reports had been circulated in regard to the extent of her fortune. He did not wish to have any mistakes or disappointments, and he told me he would give me on our wedding day fifty thousand dollars. He wished to be distinctly un-

derstood that this was all she was entitled to; and he added that, as I was an English nobleman, money could not be any object to me. I did not deny that I was a lord, and told him I was satisfied with the dowry of his ward. I understood Mr. Overton as well as he understood me; and I was satisfied I could obtain the rest of Miss Dornwood's fortune after our marriage.

“Life at Newport made sad inroads upon my funds, and it was necessary for them to be replenished very soon. I intended to obtain my supply from the vaults of the Centreport Bank, and Cutter and I completed our plans for the job. I suggested to Mr. Overton that the Cataract House was a capital place to spend a few weeks, when he spoke of leaving Newport, and it was decided that we should go there. Cutter and I agreed upon the night for the visit to the bank, but we separated before we reached the Cataract House. You know the rest of the story, Wolf.”

“Did you really expect to marry Miss Dornwood?” asked Waddie, who appeared to be disgusted with the conceit of Nick.

“Certainly I did; and I think she had changed her views since she refused me.”

“Did you acknowledge that you were a lord?”

“When we went to the Cataract House I did. Cutter wrote me some letters, and insisted that I should do so, because it would prevent suspicions in regard to us.”

“I believe you are only nineteen, Nick: did you intend to marry immediately?” I inquired, rather amused at the calculations of the strategist.

“No; not at once. I expected to get twenty or thirty thousand dollars from the bank, and to spend a year or two in Europe, as Mr. Overton talked of going there. Well, a change has come over my dreams,” added Nick, sadly, as he glanced at the irons on his wrists. “I did not see how anything could go wrong, and yet everything has failed me.”

His case was only a repetition of the common experience of evil-doers.

Night came on, and the wind, which had blown fresh all day, subsided, so that we did not reach our destination till after nine o'clock in the evening. Captain Synders took his prisoner to the town

lock-up for the night, and the next day conveyed him to the county jail, to await his examination and trial.

The day had certainly been an eventful one, and I was very much fatigued; but I was not willing to go home until I had seen Colonel Wimpleton. I was anxious to know whether the Union Line was to be broken up, and the war between the two magnates resumed. I hastened with Waddie to the house of the great man. We found him in his library.

"Ah, Wolf, I didn't expect to see you to-night; but I heard at Ucayga that you had captured one of the robbers, and recovered part of the money," said he.

"We have captured both of the robbers, and recovered all the money," I replied.

"Indeed! You have done well."

"I don't mean to say I have done all this," I protested. "I think Tom Walton has done the most, and fared the hardest."

"I heard he was shot in the arm."

"Yes, sir;" and I explained the nature of his wound.

“I was told that Waddie and Captain Synders could find nothing of the other robber.”

“We could not; but Wolf knew just where to put his hand upon him,” added Waddie. “We found him at the Cataract House; and who do you suppose he is, father?”

“I haven’t any acquaintance among that class of people, and could not be expected to know him.”

“It is Nick Van Wolter.”

“Nick!” exclaimed the colonel, with a frown.

“Yes, sir, it is Nick, otherwise Lord Palsgrave,” laughed Waddie.

The colonel was anxious to learn the particulars of the capture of the robbers, and Waddie and I related the adventures of the day. I delivered to him the package of money found in Nick’s trunk, which had been intrusted to me by the constable.

“You have had a stirring time of it,” said Colonel Wimpleton, when we had finished. “I have been in Ucayga all day, and did not know what was going on. I had not been in the house an hour when you came. I had considerable difficulty in raising the money to pay my note.”

“Have you seen Major Toppleton?” I asked, though it required some courage to ask the question, for I dreaded another explosion.

“Seen him! No!” replied Colonel Wimpleton, rising hastily from his chair, and beginning to march up and down the library. “I have heard from him, though. He was at Ucayga this morning, raising money, to prevent me, I firmly believe, from getting what I wanted. There was almost a panic in money matters at Ucayga to-day. Toppleton got all he wanted, and came down by the ten o’clock train, and everybody was short by the time I arrived. But I raised the money, and paid my note. He came over to see me, after his return, I learn,—to apologize, I suppose, for his shabby conduct. He wanted to see me very much, I am told.”

“Perhaps he came over to bring you the money you wanted,” I suggested, very mildly.

“Not he!” sneered the colonel, determined to put the worst possible construction on the actions of his former rival.

After a longer experience of human life than I had at that time, I am satisfied that it is always

the safest way to credit other people, especially friends, with good intentions. Those who believe that others mean well are seldom disappointed; and it is equally certain that those who do not believe others mean well, as seldom fail to realize their expectations. The very want of trust and confidence in others begets suspicion and evil dealing, while most people are ashamed to fall below what others give them credit for.

“Toppleton is not the man I took him for,” added the colonel, after pacing the room for a time in silence. “As soon as practicable, Wolf, our boat must go through from Hitaca to Ucayga.”

“Don’t do that, father,” interposed Waddie, as much alarmed as I was.

“It shall be done, Waddie. We can take all the through travel on the lake, and I shall no longer put money into Toppleton’s pocket.”

“But, father, you judge Major Toppleton too harshly.”

“No, I don’t. When I go to a friend in such an emergency as that of this morning, I do not like to have him make excuses, and put me off,” replied the colonel, bitterly.

“We must bear and forbear, at least until we know what others mean.”

“So Wolf says; but I don’t want to hear any such stuff,” added the magnate, angrily.

It was useless to say anything more, and Waddie had the good sense to hold his peace. We left the room together, and, tired as we both were, we could not separate for the night till we had thoroughly considered the perilous situation.

“I think myself it was rather shabby of the major to leave my father in the lurch, after what had happened,” said Waddie.

“So it was, if he did leave him in the lurch; but we must hear the other side of the story. It appears that Major Toppleton came over to see your father this forenoon, after he had been to Ucayga to raise money.”

“My father is rather hasty in his conclusions sometimes, and I hope the major will be able to explain his conduct.”

“It is doubtful whether he obtains an opportunity to explain,” I added.

“We must be peacemakers again, Wolf.”

“We can’t do much in an affair of this kind. I think, if your father had waited a little longer this morning, instead of leaving Middleport without seeing the major, all would have been well.”

“Let us hope for the best, Wolf; and in the mean time don’t say a word about breaking the union to any one.”

I promised to keep still, and we separated. I went home, crossing the lake in the Belle; but, in spite of the good fortune which had attended our efforts in the pursuit of the robbers, I had not been so sad for many a day.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MAJOR TOPPLETON EXPLAINS.

I SLEPT soundly enough that night, in spite of my anxiety concerning the perilous condition of the relations between the two sides of the lake. In the morning I called upon Tom Walton. His wound was doing very well, and he was quite comfortable. He was astonished when I told him that Nick Van Wolter was the other bank robber, and that he was Lord Palsgrave. But I was in a hurry to see Major Toppleton, and I could not stay long, though I gave Tom a bill of sale of the Belle, and received the payment for her.

I found the magnate of Middleport at home, and of course I had to tell him all about the bank robbers before anything could be said, though I had become rather tired of the subject, especially with another and more interesting one uppermost in my mind.

"You had a breezy time of it, Wolf," said the major.

"Rather exciting, sir."

"Where was Colonel Wimbleton all day? I could not find him."

"He was at Ucayga, looking up the money to pay a note which came due yesterday."

"Precisely so; he came over to see me about it in the morning. He was in a tremendous hurry, and very much excited about the robbery," added the major.

"He was excited about something else when I saw him."

"You don't mean —"

"O, no, sir," I promptly interposed, when I saw that he supposed the magnate of Centreport had been drinking again. "Nothing of that kind."

"You understand me. Well, I am glad that he has not fallen back. Your remark startled me, Wolf."

"I am afraid the colonel is not as kindly disposed towards you as formerly."

"Why, what's the matter?" demanded the major, evidently alarmed at my suggestion.

"I think there is a misunderstanding. He came

over to see you yesterday morning, and he thought you were not inclined to assist him in the emergency."

"What an idea! I intended that his note should be paid, even if my own was not, though I hurried home to attend to the payment of it. This is very strange," mused the major. "I was not aware that I said or did anything that could give offence to him."

"I am confident there has been a mistake; but I do not know that I ought to repeat anything he said to me."

"In the interest of peace and friendship you may do so, Wolf. What did he say?" asked the major, anxiously.

"He said that when he informed you he had a note of twenty thousand dollars to pay, and that the bank had been robbed, instead of helping him out, you answered that you had a note to pay yourself."

"I certainly did tell him that I had a large sum to pay; but I also told him that I would see what could be done. I invited him to breakfast with me, and told him I would go and see the cashier of our bank. I

did not suppose he had any doubt of my willingness to help him; and the only question with me was, how it was to be done. He was in a desperate hurry, and could not wait a minute. The steamer was coming over after him, before she went up the lake in pursuit of the robber. I told him then that I would see him on the wharf in ten or fifteen minutes, and hastened to find the cashier. He was not at home; but I soon found him, and learned that the funds in our bank were not sufficient to pay both notes. I immediately decided to raise the amount needed to pay the colonel's note, in Ucayga. I sent an order to Lewis Holgate to get up steam on the dummy, and then went as fast as I could walk to the wharf. The steamer was just leaving the pier when I came in sight of it."

"The colonel waited for you till the time expired," I added.

"I was not five minutes behind time. The absence of the cashier had detained me a little, but I could not help it. However, I supposed the colonel would return before eleven o'clock to raise the money to pay his note."

“He was very much excited about it.”

“I am really very sorry. Perhaps I did not speak as explicitly as I ought to have done; but it never occurred to me that he would misunderstand my motives. The dummy ran down to Hitaca as a special express to convey me. I raised the money, and returned by the ten o'clock train. The steamer had come back from up the lake; but I could not find Colonel Wimpleton. In the afternoon I heard that he had gone to Ucayga, and I was on the lookout for him till the last train arrived. The money has been in our bank since eleven o'clock yesterday, and I have a check for the amount in my pocket now.”

“The colonel was rather too hasty in his conclusions. The steamer returned to Middleport at ten, and he took the train for Ucayga, where he raised the money and paid the note himself.”

“I regret that he has any feeling on the subject,” added the major, with much anxiety. “I must go over and see him.”

“I am afraid your meeting will not be a pleasant one.”

“I will state the facts just as they are, and I hope

he will see that there has been a mistake. The Ucayga is coming in, and the ferry steamer will start in a few minutes."

We walked down to the wharf together. My two bears had just been landed from the steamer, in charge of one of Captain Portman's men. They were very tractable, and were the centre of attraction on the wharf. They were willing to shake hands with everybody, and seemed to be enjoying themselves very much. I took charge of one of them, while the man retained the other, and we led them towards my father's house, followed by a large escort of loafers and juveniles. We had a small barn on the place, in which we secured the bears.

My sisters were very much afraid of them, and my mother declared she could not have the brutes on the place; but I hoped all of them would think better of it, and make friends with my pets. After the man had gone, I brought out my carpenter's tools, and proceeded to fit up the barn for the accommodation of the bears. The animals were so full of fun they would not let me work, and I was obliged to tie them to a tree in the garden. My mother and my sisters

stood at the windows of the house watching them; but I could not induce them to make the acquaintance of my new friends. When I found that my sisters were really afraid of the bears, I was rather sorry I had brought them home.

While I was at work I was surprised by a visit from Colonel Wimpleton and Waddie. As they entered the yard, both bears stood up, and offered to shake hands with the visitors. Waddie accepted the proffered paw, but the colonel was more particular in the choice of his acquaintances.

“Have you seen Major Toppleton this morning?” I inquired of the colonel.

“No; and I have no desire to see him,” replied the magnate, coldly.

“He went over to see you about nine o’ clock.”

“I was not at home. Have you done anything about the steamer, Wolf?”

“No, sir. What do you wish to have done?”

“Didn’t I tell you yesterday what I wished to have done?”

“I haven’t done anything yet, sir.”

“I told you to make the new arrangement.”

"I hope you will see Major Toppleton before anything is done."

"I shall not see him," answered the colonel, sourly. "You may notify the Railroad Company that the present arrangement will be discontinued, say from the first of next month."

"Of course I shall do as I am directed, but I am quite sure there is a misunderstanding between you and the major."

"I don't care to argue the matter. What are you going to do with these bears, Wolf?"

"I'm going to keep them as pets."

At this moment the one which had frightened Miss Dornwood stood up, and expressed a desire to shake hands with Colonel Wimpleton.

"They are perfectly harmless, sir," said I, seeing that the great man was in doubt.

"Won't they bite?"

"No, sir."

Thus assured the colonel took the offered paw of the bear, and in a few moments they were excellent friends, for Bruin's ways were very winning. Waddie was playing with the other, and both my visitors were

very much interested in the animals. While they were occupied in this manner, Major Toppleton presented himself in the yard.

“Good morning, colonel,” said the major.

“Good morning,” replied the magnate of Centreport, very stiffly.

“I heard you were here, colonel, and I came up to see you. I looked for you all day yesterday, and have been looking for you all the morning.”

“Sorry you gave yourself so much trouble.”

I saw that Major Toppleton was nettled at the coldness of his reception, and I was afraid he would be angry. As he approached the bears, both of them rose and offered their accustomed greeting. The major shook hands with both of them, for he had already made their acquaintance on the wharf.

“When I went down to the wharf yesterday, your steamer had been gone only a few moments,” continued the magnate of Middleport. “I was sorry that I missed you.”

“It didn’t make any difference,” said the colonel. “You will attend to the matter of which I spoke to you, Wolf,” he added, edging off towards the gate.

“Perhaps it didn’t make any difference to you, but it did to me,” continued the major. “I am afraid I did not, in the excitement of the moment, express myself as clearly as I should have done.”

“As clearly as was necessary. I understood you perfectly,” replied the colonel, still edging towards the gate.

“Then you understood that I intended to raise the money you wanted.”

“No, I did not. You told me you had a note to pay yourself, and that was as much as to say you could do nothing for me.”

“There was, indeed, a mistake then; and I am very sorry that I did not express myself more clearly.”

“I paid my note, and nothing more need be said about the matter,” growled Colonel Wimpleton.

“My dear colonel —”

“Don’t ‘dear’ me after this.”

I trembled for the major when this rude remark was uttered, for his temper was not always to be depended upon, and certainly the provocation was very strong. I never saw a better opportunity to get up a quarrel, and nothing but a little forbearance on the part of

the only one of the two who seemed to be capable of exercising this virtue could ward off the calamity. The colonel was unreasonable; but the major felt that he had not plainly stated his intentions. As usual, there was blame on both sides.

CHAPTER XXIV.

BEAR AND FORBEAR.

“COLONEL WIMPLETON, there has been a misunderstanding between us,” said the major, with dignity. “I feel that I am not without blame.”

“I don’t demand any apology,” added the colonel.

“I wish to make an explanation. If after that you are not satisfied, I will not complain.”

“I don’t ask any explanation.”

“But I desire to make one, if you will do me the favor to hear it,” continued Major Toppleton, taking from his pocket the check he had drawn the day before, and handing it to the colonel.

“It is too late,” said the latter, as he glanced at the check.

“It was written yesterday at eleven o’clock, and the money was in the bank to cash it. If I failed to say yesterday morning that your note should be

paid whether mine was or not, I failed to say all that I felt and all that I intended."

"You didn't say that," replied the colonel, relaxing the frown upon his brow a little. "You simply told me you had a note to pay, but would see what you could do."

"I ought to have said more, for I meant more. When I found you had gone, I went express to Ucayga, and raised the money for you, returning to Middleport at eleven."

"Did you really raise the money for me?"

"I did, as I intended to do from the first."

Colonel Wimpleton's face was changed, and had almost relaxed into a smile.

"I didn't understand you," said he. "When you said you had a note to pay, I took it as an excuse for not helping me out of my difficulty."

"I certainly did not offer it as such. I was thinking only of the manner of raising the money for you. When I came back from Ucayga, I deposited the money I had brought with me, wrote this check, and hastened over to Centreport to find you. I failed to see you, but I was on the lookout for you all the rest of the day."

Major Toppleton explained his position as fully as he had to me. The colonel was satisfied, for he could not be otherwise, when he found that the former had done all that a friend could do to aid him.

“Major, I wronged you, and I’m sorry for it,” said Colonel Wimpleton. “I ought to have given you credit for good intentions, at least. Wolf, you, needn’t attend to that matter of which I spoke to you.”

I wanted to give three cheers, and I should have done so, if I had not wished to conceal from the major the length to which the colonel had carried his resentment. As it was, I vented my delight in a grand frolic with the bears.

“Colonel, I am sorry that I failed to tell you what I intended to do,” added the major. “I don’t blame you for the construction you put upon my words.”

“But I blame myself. It all looks plain enough to me now, though it did not before. Forgive me, major, and I promise never to misjudge you again.”

“And I hope you will forgive the stupid manner



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in which I answered you yesterday morning," added Major Toppleton.

"Here is my hand, major."

As they stepped forward to shake hands, they came near the two bears. Both of the bruins immediately abandoned their play, stood up, and each extended his paw to the magnate near to him. The two gentlemen laughed heartily as they saw the bears; but they shook hands with each other, and then with their humble imitators.

"This suggests some names for your pets, Wolf," said Waddie, laughing.

"I thought of that before. This is BEAR," I replied, putting my hand on the head of my first acquaintance; "and this is FORBEAR," I added, taking the other by the paw.

"Bear and Forbear," said Colonel Wimpleton. "You have preached that sermon to me once, Wolf; but I was not in the humor to hear it. I appreciate the two bears better now."

"And you will bear with me next time I make a blunder, and seem to stand in a doubtful position," added Major Toppleton.

"Most assuredly I will, if you forbear, as you did to-day, when I made rude and ungentlemanly speeches to you."

"I think those two bears will make a team which will drag any man through the world with peace and comfort," I ventured to add.

"You are right, Wolf. I must have those two bears," said the colonel.

"Well, sir, my mother and sisters are afraid of them, and I don't know that I shall be able to keep them here."

"I meant bear and forbear," laughed the colonel.

"Those are the names of these bears."

"Well, I should be very happy to have the live bears, for whenever I see them, they will remind me of the lesson I have learned to-day."

"You have a nice place for them over in your grounds; and I suppose I can see them there whenever I wish."

"Certainly you can."

"If they should get loose when I am away, they would frighten the whole neighborhood, for we have no man to see to them," I added.

My mother and my sisters would be delighted to get rid of them; and I was afraid they might do mischief in my absence. Besides, there was such a striking fitness in presenting them to the magnate of Centreport under the circumstances, that I could not have resisted the inclination to dispose of them in this manner, even if they had not promised to be a nuisance to me. It was a fortunate circumstance that the explanation and reconciliation had taken place in the presence of the bears, for the association would always be remembered by the colonel.

I presented the bears to him.

The two magnates departed together, and Waddie and I were to remove Bear and Forbear to their new home.

“I didn’t know my father was coming here when we crossed the lake,” said Waddie. “I came to see you about another matter.”

“What’s that?”

Waddie blushed.

“I thought we ought to go down to Ruoara and call upon Miss Dornwood,” said he, with some hesitation.

"Of course you are moved in this matter by a sense of duty," I laughingly replied.

"Not wholly, Wolf; but I should like to know how she is after her cruise."

"No doubt you would."

"You may laugh at me if you like, Wolf; but I think Miss Dornwood is a very pretty girl."

"And a very good girl too, Waddie, which is more and better."

"I'm going down to Ruoara, and wish you would go with me."

"I will."

"We must get the Belle, for the Raven, you know, is moored off High Bluff."

We called upon Tom Walton to obtain the use of the boat, and then led the bears down to the shore of the lake, where the Belle was moored. "Bear" went on board very readily, but "Forbear" did not seem to like this mode of conveyance, and declined to take the place assigned to him. Waddie, impatient to reach Ruoara, was disposed to pitch him into the standing-room by force; but I entreated him to forbear. While he was hoisting the

mainsail, I coaxed the animal; and seeing his brother so comfortable in the boat, he finally yielded his own inclination to mine, and went on board. I fastened them so that they could not fall overboard if they engaged in a frolic on the passage, and Waddie pushed off.

When the Belle began to jump on the waves in the Narrows, Forbear exhibited some signs of terror, and was inclined to make himself unhappy; but he soon took part in the game between Bear and myself, and we reached the Centreport shore without any difficulty. I found it was best to bear even with a bear, and to forbear as long as forbearance is a virtue — which is much longer than many people are willing to believe. We marched the interesting couple up to a rustic deer house, in the grounds of Colonel Wimpleton, which had been designated as their future abode. We made them comfortable, and then left them to enjoy life as they could, and to enforce the great moral lesson which their names illustrated.

“I meant to have been in Ruoara before this time,” said Waddie, as he led the way to the lake at a pace which was trying to my legs.

"What's your hurry, Waddie?"

"I am afraid Mr. Overton will be there before us."

"What if he is?"

"I wish to have Miss Dornwood and her friends understand all about her guardian before he sees her again."

"She evidently understands him quite as well as any one else," I replied, as we embarked in the *Belle*, and Waddie took the tiller.

"We have the benefit of Nick's revelation, and I think that is enough to condemn him."

"I don't think Nick's testimony is worth much, though I have no doubt it is all true. I agree with you that it will be well to have Mr. Pinkerton informed in regard to Nick's trade with him."

"I wonder what Mr. Pinkerton will do?" added Waddie.

"That will depend upon what Mr. Overton does. I judge, from the temper of Miss Dornwood, that she will refuse to live with her guardian again."

"I hope we shall get there before he does."

"Probably we shall. It was too late for him to come up in the afternoon boat when we left the

Cataract House It is not likely that he took the morning boat to-day, and we shall be in Ruoara before he can get there, if he takes the afternoon steamer."

But Waddie was nervous and uneasy. He talked about Miss Dornwood during the rest of the passage, which, however, was not a long one. We landed at the wharf, and hastened to the house of the Pinkertons, where we were kindly welcomed by all, including Miss Dornwood. Mr. Overton had not been seen or heard from.

"I am very glad to see you again, Mr. Wimpleton," said Miss Dornwood; "for I want to thank you and your friend again for the kind service you rendered me."

"We were very glad of the opportunity to serve you," replied Waddie, blushing; and I could not help realizing that my friend was "fatally insnared."

"But where is my other friend, the skipper of the Belle, as you called him?" asked the young lady.

"He was shot in the arm yesterday by one of the bank robbers."

"I am so sorry! We heard all about your capture of the robber."

"There was a report this forenoon that the other robber had been caught," said Mr. Pinkerton.

"Yes, sir; he was captured in the afternoon, at the Cataract House," replied Waddie. "All the money has been recovered."

"That's very fortunate."

"Who do you think the other robber was, Miss Dornwood?" asked Waddie.

"I have no suspicion."

"Lord Palsgrave."

"Lord Palsgrave!" exclaimed she, her cheeks reddening with confusion.

"And Lord Palsgrave turns out to be the son of the very worthy commander of the Ucayga—Nick Van Wolter."

Of course we were obliged to tell the whole story, and by the time it was finished, dinner was ready; and before we had finished that, a servant announced Mr. and Mrs. Overton.

There was a prospect of a lively breeze.

CHAPTER XXV.

MISS DORNWOOD'S GUARDIAN.

WADDIE and I, in the course of our narrative, had fully informed Mr. Pinkerton in regard to the relations of Nick Van Wolter with Mr. Overton.

“Now, Captain Penniman, you and I will see Mr. Overton. Waddie, if you will go to the office of my lawyer, Mr. Bayard, and state to him all the facts in the case, you will oblige me very much,” said Mr. Pinkerton. “In about half an hour return with him.”

“I will do so with pleasure,” replied Waddie.

“Perhaps Miss Dornwood had better go with you. She can tell a part of her story to better advantage than you can.”

Waddie was still better pleased with this arrangement, and they left the house by the side door, so as not to be seen by Mr. Overton in the library. I followed Mr. Pinkerton into the presence of the guardian

and his wife. I bowed to them as I entered, but they evidently were not pleased to see me.

“I am informed that Miss Dornwood, my ward, is in your house, sir,” Mr. Overton began.

“Not at this moment, though she is within call, and will be here in half an hour,” replied Mr. Pinkerton.

“You are aware, sir, that I am her legal guardian?”

“I am, sir.”

“Permit me to say, sir, that your conduct in harboring and encouraging her in her present vicious course is entirely unjustifiable,” continued Mr. Overton, sternly and severely.

“Permit me to say, sir, that I take an entirely different view of the matter,” added Mr. Pinkerton, very courteously.

“Then you take a very extraordinary view of it.”

“There is room for some difference of opinion on this subject, and, until better informed, I shall be obliged to retain my own view.”

“Miss Dornwood ran away from me. Are you aware of this fact, sir?”

“I am; you locked her into her room, and she escaped. With the assistance of some good friends,

she came here, where I purpose to have her remain as long as she is pleased to do so."

"Allow me to remind you again, sir, that I am her legal guardian."

"Allow me to remind you, sir, that you have abused your office."

"That is a very strong statement, Mr. Pinkerton," replied the guardian, who seemed to be surprised at the charge.

"I have no doubt it can be fully proved, Mr. Overton. A young lady of seventeen is legally an infant, but not morally. The duties of a guardian are those of a father."

"I have endeavored to be as a father towards her," added Mr. Overton, who was plainly unprepared for the step which Mr. Pinkerton's remarks foreshadowed.

"Do you think a father would lock his daughter of seventeen into a room in a hotel?"

"If she disobeyed him — yes."

"Or drag her by force through the grounds of a public hotel?"

"The law would justify him in doing so, if she refused to obey his reasonable commands."

“Perhaps it would; I will leave that matter in the hands of the lawyers. Certainly, if the young lady were not absolutely vicious, the moral sense of the community would not justify either father or guardian in the use of force.”

“She is absolutely vicious,” answered the guardian, boldly.

“Sir, you insult her!” said Mr. Pinkerton, indignantly. “I know her well; and a more gentle, modest, and well-behaved girl does not live in this country.”

“She impudently refused to obey me.”

“Only after you, in the presence of the young gentleman who had assisted her in her peril and terror, had treated her in the most outrageous manner; after you had ordered her to the house, like a child. Your conduct was that of a common bully.”

“Sir!”

“I wish to be entirely frank with you, sir. You have made her life miserably unhappy by your petty tyranny and contemptible espionage. You have not treated her with any of the consideration due to a young lady who has entered her teens,” continued Mr. Pinkerton, calmly.

“Am I to understand, sir, that you intend to remove me from my office of guardian on these grounds?”

“No, sir, not exactly on those grounds. The law, in most if not all the states, provides that when a guardian becomes ‘evidently unsuitable’ for the discharge of his duties, he shall be removed.”

“Do you think I am an unsuitable person?” demanded Mr. Overton, who was very nervous and much alarmed.

“I do so consider you, sir.”

“If you think I am too strict with her, though I have only acted for her welfare, I will be less so in the future,” said Mr. Overton, who now seemed disposed to compromise.

“Miss Dornwood says she will never live with you again under any circumstances, even if she is obliged to earn her own living.”

“Is her will to be the law?”

“She is entitled to be consulted. But here she comes, and on this subject she may speak for herself. The gentleman with her is Mr. Bayard, her legal adviser and mine.”

Miss Dornwood, attended by Waddie and the law-

yer, entered the library. Mr. and Mrs. Overton bowed coldly as they entered. The young lady was very much embarrassed, and seated herself as far from her guardian as the size of the room would permit.

Mr. Pinkerton informed the legal gentleman what had thus far transpired. Mr. Bayard, who by this time fully understood the subject, explained the law, and said that Miss Dornwood could petition the Court of Probate, or Surrogate, to remove the guardian, and appoint a new one.

“Prepare the papers as soon as convenient, Mr. Bayard,” said Mr. Pinkerton.

“The petition must be presented to the court having jurisdiction in the cause when the will of Mr. Dornwood was admitted to probate. Perhaps Mr. Overton would prefer to resign his office of guardian, which it is competent for him to do,” added the lawyer.

“No, sir; I don’t intend to do that,” replied Mr. Overton.

“Such a course might be best for you.”

“Gentlemen, you speak to me as though I were a monster, and not a gentleman; as though I were guilty of some base crime,” protested Mr. Overton.

“That is precisely the view I take of it, after listening to Miss Dornwood’s statement, and that of Mr. Wimpleton.”

“Sir, do you mean to insult me? I am not on trial.”

“You are not, but you ought to be,” coolly retorted the legal gentleman.

“If there is any law in the land—”

“Plenty of it,” interposed the cool lawyer. “As the attorney of Miss Dornwood, I only hope you will commence the proceedings. You are excited, sir. Pray keep calm.”

“Can I keep calm while I am charged with a base crime?” fumed Mr. Overton, rising from his chair, and pacing the room in his wrath.

“I see that you do not understand the case. Let me refresh your memory, and point out to you the bearings of some of your actions. In the first place, you went to the Cataract House with a couple of bank robbers.”

“Only one, sir,” I suggested.

“With one, then; that is just as bad.”

“But he was an impostor, and I did not know that

he was not what he represented himself to be," replied the guardian.

"I think you did. You must have known that he was a common blackleg, for you saw him plying his trade in a gambling saloon at Cape May. You had an understanding with him, after you had seen him at the gambling table,—not as a visitor, but as one who was plundering a victim,—that he should marry your ward, and that he was to accept, as her dowry in full, fifty thousand dollars, though the young lady's fortune was four times that amount. You made this bargain with the blackleg and bank robber."

Mr. Overton was very red, and then very pale. His limbs were shaky, and he was obliged to resume his chair. He attempted to defend himself, and declared that the testimony of a bank robber against a gentleman in his position would prove nothing.

"I grant that it is a very poor kind of testimony," replied Mr. Bayard. "But, so far as it can be confirmed by other witnesses, it will be useful. Did you not tell Miss Dornwood that you would not consent to her marriage with any other person than this bank robber and blackleg?"

“The gentleman came to me as an English lord, and I thought it was a good match for her.”

“Lord Palsgrave!” laughed the lawyer. “You knew very well that he was not a lord. You do not answer my question, Mr. Overton.”

“I am not on trial.”

“Will Miss Dornwood answer?”

“He did tell me that I could marry only Lord Palsgrave with his consent,” replied she, with a blush; and it was plain enough that she had never thought of marrying anybody.

“Do you intend to drag all this matter into the court?” demanded Mr. Overton.

“Undoubtedly; and we intend to examine Mr. Dornwood’s will very critically, especially that part of it relating to the consent of the guardian to Miss Dornwood’s marriage. We believe it has been tampered with.”

Mr. Overton appeared to be stunned by this declaration. Doubtless, like all other evil-doers, he supposed that his deeds were entirely covered, and that no one suspected him of anything wrong. He was unable again to regain his self-possession, and Mr.

Bayard restated the grounds on which he proposed to proceed.

"I will resign," gasped he, at last, after his wife had whispered in his ear.

"That is the most prudent step you can take," added the lawyer.

"I wish you to understand that I do not resign because I have done anything wrong, but because I do not wish to have my name publicly connected with a bank robber. I did not know what he was," protested Mr. Overton.

"You can put any construction you please upon your own conduct," said Mr. Bayard. "It will be necessary for you to render an account of all your expenditures as the guardian of Miss Dornwood, and deliver her property into the hands of your successor."

"That's a gratuitous insult," replied the crestfallen guardian.

But a time was fixed for the transaction of this important business, and Mr. Overton agreed to be present with his resignation. He and his wife departed sadder and wiser than they came. As there was no doubt in the minds of any of us that he had

intended to rob his ward of the greater portion of her fortune, we did not pity him.

Waddie devoted himself assiduously to Miss Dornwood during the rest of our stay at Mr. Pinkerton's, and it was quite late in the evening when we returned to Middleport. The next day we went up the lake again, and Waddie sailed the Raven down to Centreport. After this he went down the lake as far as Ruoara about every day. At the end of a fortnight, however, when Mr. Pinkerton and Miss Dornwood went to her residence to attend the proceedings at the Surrogate Court, Waddie consented to finish the vacation with me in the upper waters of the lake. Tommy Toppleton went with us this time; Tom Walton was again able to take his place at the helm, and we had a splendid time.

We were obliged to attend court at the examination of the bank robbers, who were fully committed for trial. Subsequently they were convicted, and sentenced to twenty years in the penitentiary.

Mr. Pinkerton was appointed the guardian of Miss Dornwood, after the resignation of Mr. Overton; and the Raven plied very regularly between Ruoara and Centreport.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE YOUNG SKIPPER OF THE BANSHEE.

“WHAT boat’s that?” said Tom Walton to me, as we walked down to the shore where the Belle was moored.

“That’s the Banshee,” I replied, quietly.

“Never heard of her.”

“She is new—just finished.”

“She’s a first-rate boat, and has a bully name,” added Tom, as he critically surveyed the new craft.

The Banshee was larger than the Grace, and was really a magnificent boat. Tom was delighted with her, and expressed his admiration in the warmest terms. I am willing to acknowledge that there was a conspiracy against Tom; but the time for springing the trap upon him had not quite arrived. I had engaged him to take out a party to sail that day. We went on board the Belle; but Tom kept one eye on the Banshee all the time.

"Can't we go aboard of her, Wolf?" asked Tom.

"We haven't time now. There comes Major Topleton, with his family; and we have to go over to Centreport for the rest of the party."

"I should like to ask how large a party you intend to take out in the Belle. There are five of the Topletons, and you and I make seven."

"We will go over and see how many there are on the other side," I answered quietly.

We crossed the lake, and found five Wimpletons, Miss Dornwood, and Miss Pinkerton.

"Good gracious, Wolf!" exclaimed the skipper, in a low tone, and with a look of infinite embarrassment. "The standing-room of the Belle won't hold but ten, and they are crowded at that. We can't carry them all, Wolf."

"We will try, at any rate."

"Try! You might as well try to put a ton of hay into an egg-shell. You can't do it. You must sail the Raven, and carry part of them."

"We will take them over to the other shore, and then decide what shall be done," I added, as Tom ran the Belle up to the landing-steps.

The party entered the boat, and when they were seated, the standing-room was quite full, for the ladies were considerably expanded.

“Where do you intend to put the other five, Wolf?” whispered Tom, when we were under way.

“I don’t think we can put them into the Belle,” I replied.

Tom was very much troubled, and worried sorely. Why had I not told him that our party was to consist of all Middleport and all Centreport? He would have engaged another boat. He did not believe he had “feed” enough on board for such a crowd. He continued to fret, in his good-natured way, until we were within hailing distance of the Banshee.

“The Toppletons have all gone on board of that new boat,” said Tom.

“They probably want to see her. Suppose we run alongside, and take a look at her,” I suggested.

“I should like to see her, first rate,” answered the skipper. “You didn’t tell me whose boat she was, Wolf.”

“She was built for Captain Portman.”

“She’s a regular out-and-outer; and she will sail

like sixty. Look at that bow! She is sharp enough to cut cheese with; but she has plenty of beam, and won't be crank."

Tom ran the Belle under the stern of the Ban-shee, and came up at the accommodation steps on the port side. Like a gallant skipper as he was, Tom assisted the ladies on board of the new boat, and then stepped on deck himself. We walked about the beautiful craft, and the skipper examined everything with a critical eye. Passing down the fore-hatch, we entered the cook-room, which was fitted up with every convenience.

"I should like to be the cook on board the Ban-shee," said Tom, as he examined the appointments of the kitchen.

"Wouldn't you rather be the skipper?" I asked.

"Perhaps I would, but I never expect to go skipper of such a nobby yacht as this."

"Possibly you may," I added, as we passed into one of the two state-rooms which occupied the middle of the vessel.

"What's this for?"

"This is the captain's room."

"First rate," said Tom, with enthusiasm.

We went into the other state-room, and then passed into the main cabin, which was large enough to contain four berths. The floor was richly carpeted, and the table was provided with racks and water pitcher. There was an abundance of lockers and closets, which were stocked with dishes and stores. Rich hangings partially concealed the berths, and everything was as luxurious as the parlor of a gentleman's house. Tom gazed with admiration and delight at the elegant appointments of the cabin. By this time the entire company had assembled in this stately apartment, and all of them were watching Tom. No one noticed any of the rest of us.

"Why, they are getting her under way," said Tom. "Hadn't we better be off?"

"Not just yet," I replied.

"But I'm afraid the Belle will be in her way."

"It's all right;" and I proceeded to point out the conveniences on board of the yacht.

In a few moments we heard the rattle of the jib, and the Banshee was off.

"I think we will go on deck now," I continued.

“Why, she’s off now!” exclaimed Tom, springing to the steps. “Where’s the Belle?”

“She is moored all right, Tom,” I interposed. “The ladies have concluded to go in the Balshee if you will take the helm.”

“O, this was the game — was it?” laughed Tom. “I didn’t see how you expected to carry fourteen in the Belle. I’ll take the helm, and glad of the job.”

All the party followed him to the standing-room. Joe Poole, who had formerly sailed with Tom and me in the Grace, had the helm. There were also two men on the forecastle, coiling up the jib-halyards.

“Here, Tom,” I interposed, as he was about to take the helm from Joe Poole. “You didn’t look at this arrangement for the spy-glass.”

I pointed to the glass, which was secured on a couple of spring brackets, so that it could not be moved from its place by the pitching of the vessel. Under it was a large silver plate, upon which an inscription was engraved. It was placed directly over the entrance to the cabin, and in calling Tom’s

attention to the spy-glass, I intended he should see this plate. All the party in the standing-room were watching him with the most intense interest and delight.

“Good gracious, Wolf!” shouted the skipper, his eyes opening till they were as large as the hawse-holes of the yacht.

I thought he would be crazy, he was so astonished and delighted. The inscription on the plate was as follows:—

“Presented to Captain Thomas Walton by the Directors of the Centreport Bank, in testimony of their high appreciation of his gallant conduct and skilful management in the capture of the robbers of their Bank.”

“I say, Wolf, won’t you make a little speech for me?” said Tom.

“Make it yourself, Tom. There is the president of the bank,” I replied, pointing to Colonel Wimpleton.

“Colonel Wimpleton, this is handsome of you, and I thank you ten thousand times—call it ten million times. If my heart were as big as the moon, it would shake all over with gratitude. I don’t de-

serve this, but I am the happiest skipper that ever trod a plank."

The entire party clapped their hands, and seemed to be almost as happy as Tom was.

"The money which that robber had in his bag would pay for a dozen such yachts as this; and it would have been lost without you," said Colonel Wimpleton. "It's only a salve for your wounded arm."

It was some time before Captain Walton was in condition to take the helm, he was so excited. He went all over the Banshee again, and I attended him.

"So you were fooling me all the time, Wolf," said he. "But you said she was built for Captain Portman."

"So she was; but as it was rather late in the season for him, he was kind enough to let the colonel have her, and another will be built for him before spring."

"She's a bully boat."

"She will make your fortune, Tom, for people will like her."

“That’s so. I can let the Belle, and run the Banshee myself.”

Tom finally cooled off enough to take the helm. He was the lion of the day, and he handled the yacht so as to call forth the admiration of the party. Colonel Wimpleton had consulted me in regard to the reward for Tom, and I had suggested the yacht, because I knew she would enable him to make a great deal of money. The magnate could not wait for a boat to be built, and Captain Portman, to whom I applied for information in regard to the cost of the Banshee, enabled him to obviate this delay. Certainly Tom could not have been better suited if he had been consulted. He was very grateful, and very modest, winning the regard of all on board.

We sailed up to the Cataract House, where the company dined; after which the excursion was continued to the head of the lake. All had a splendid time; and, as Grace Toppleton was present, it was one of the happy days of a lifetime to me. We landed Miss Dornwood and her friend at Ruoara, and came to anchor off Middleport before dark.

The Banshee was immediately in great demand.

Applications for her came from every town on the lake; and when the season closed, Tom had money enough to pay a quarter down on a house he bought for his mother. Joe Poole ran the Belle when a skipper was needed by her party, and half a dozen row-boats added to Tom's income. One of his brothers attended to the letting of the boats, and the next season Tom did a large business. The family, by the exertions of Tom, was now on the high road to prosperity.

A lapse of five years has produced no change in the pleasant relations between the two sides of the lake, though it has witnessed many changes in the circumstances of those who have figured in my story. The Union Line is still a unit. The Lake Shore Railroad does a large business. Captain Van Wolter still commands the Ucayga, and the only sorrow of his life is the fact that his son has fifteen long years of imprisonment before him. All the old students have left the Institutes, and new ones have taken their places.

Tom Walton, with a great pair of bushy whiskers, still runs the Banshee, and makes money in the boat business. He has built a very comfortable double house near his boat pier, and lives in one side himself, while his mother occupies the other. He is married, and is regarded as one of the solid men of Middleport; he can no longer be called "The Young Skipper of Lake Ucayga," though his heart is as young and fresh as ever.

There have been quite a number of new houses erected in Middleport and Centreport. Near the mansion of Colonel Wimpleton is the elegant house of Mr. Waddie Wimpleton. Miss Dornwood that was, Mrs. Wimpleton that is, lives there, of course, and is highly esteemed by everybody in town, not only as an elegant lady, but as a useful and benevolent woman. By the side of this house is another, occupied by Mr. Thomas Toppleton, for his lady desired to live near her mother and brother; and it was whispered that her husband thought his chances of being sent to Congress from the district in which Centreport was situated were better than in the one to which Middleport belonged. At any rate, Tom-

my has political aspirations, and is a rising man; and I am only sorry that I shall not have the opportunity to vote for him when he is nominated.

On the other side of the lake, between the mansion of Major Toppleton and the shore, stands what I regard as a very pretty house. It was erected by the major for the use of his oldest daughter, and *we* live there. I shall be happy to introduce Mrs. Penniman to any of my friends who call. I wish to say, aside, so that she will not hear me, that I think she is even prettier now than she was on the day when I first saw her, and helped her into the engine-room of the dummy. She is very happy, and I am sure I am. Her father bestowed a very liberal dowry upon her when we were married, and I have doubled my little fortune in five years, so that we are abundantly provided with this world's goods.

I am still the general agent of the Union Line, but I am not obliged to work very hard. I am interested in several railroads, including the Great Lake Shore in Ohio, which had the audacity to steal our name. My father still runs the engine of the

Ucayga, in connection with Christy Holgate, who has been true to his high Christian aspirations. Lewis Holgate did not turn out very well. He was discharged from his place on the Lake Shore Railroad, and the last I knew of him, he was "firing" on one of the main lines.

My mother comes over to our house almost every afternoon, where she is always warmly welcomed by Grace, who loves her almost as much as I do. I often think, when I see her, that the Bible lessons she taught me have been the foundation of all that I am or ever shall be. I shudder when I think where I might have been without her; and I do not think it is egotism for me to say, in view of the facts, that the principle of "Love your enemies," which she imparted to me, was the basis upon which the present happy peace between the two sides of the lake rested; for Waddie and Tommy confessed that they had learned the lesson from me. She is a good mother, and I shall love, and cherish, and pray for her as long as I live.

The two bears are still alive, though the fun is

all gone out of them. They are now grave, sedate, and dignified bears, and, as such, are fit symbols of the Christian sentiment they represent. I am grateful to them for the good they have unconsciously done, and I never call them by any other names than BEAR and FORBEAR.



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